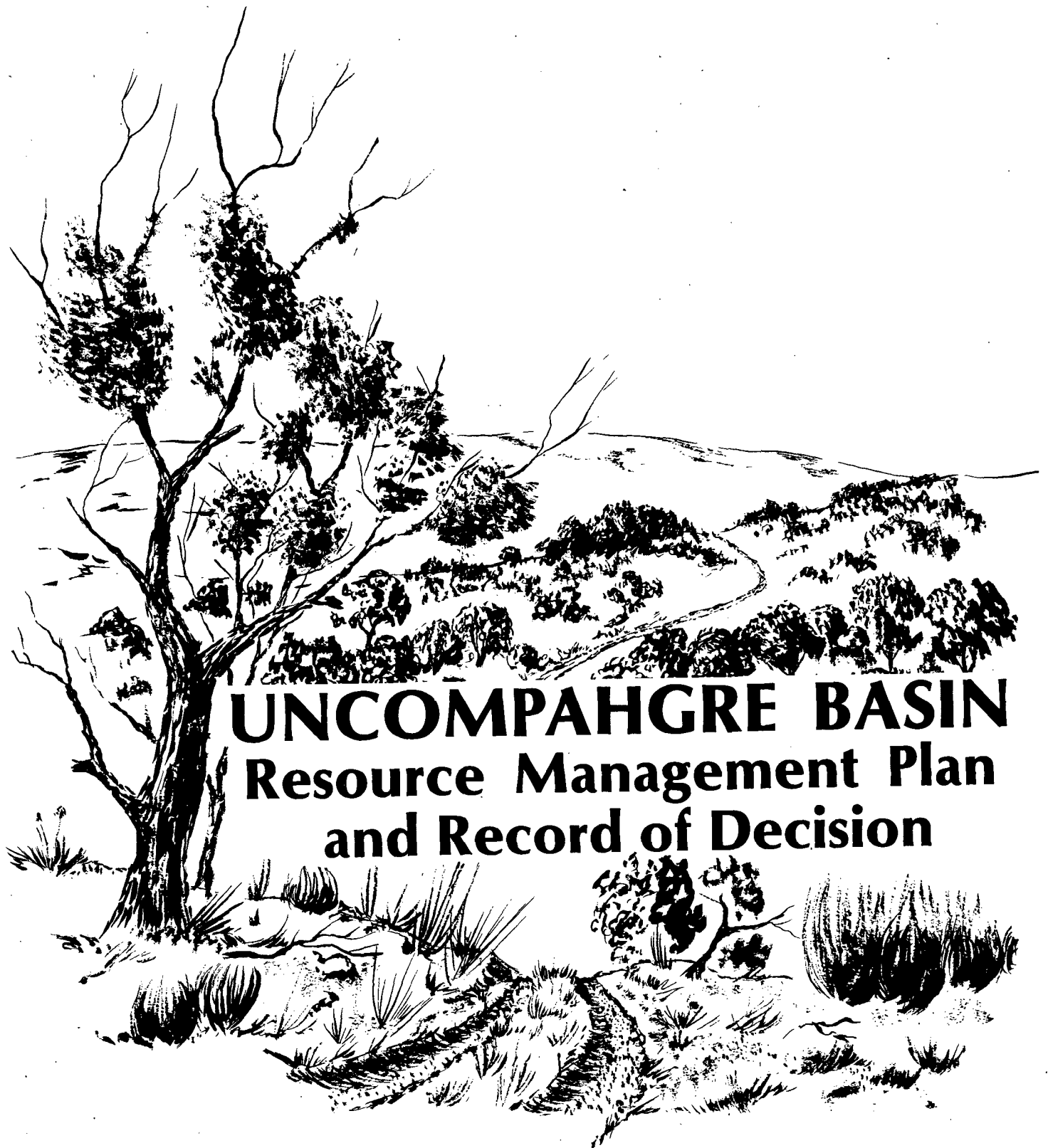


July 1989



UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN

Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Montrose District, Colorado
Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area

RECORD OF DECISION
UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Montrose District
Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area

RECORD OF DECISION

UNCOMPAGRE BASIN

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

This document records the decisions reached by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for managing 483,077 surface acres of public land and 755,923 acres (including those beneath the surface acres) of federal mineral estate within the approximately 1.38 million acre Uncompahgre Basin Planning Area.

DECISION

The Uncompahgre Basin Resource Management Plan (RMP) as described in Chapter Two of the attached RMP is approved. The plan was prepared under the regulations for implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 CFR 1600). An environmental impact statement was prepared for this plan in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The plan described in Chapter Two of the attached RMP reflects the proposed plan as set forth in the proposed plan and associated final environmental impact statement published in September 1988.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Four alternatives for managing the resources within the planning area were considered in the development of the plan. These were identified as the Continuation of Current Management Alternative, the Production Alternative, the Conservation Alternative, and the Preferred Alternative. Each alternative was described and

analyzed in the draft RMP/EIS and proposed RMP/final environmental impact statement.

The Continuation of Current Management Alternative maintained present management direction utilizing existing Management Framework Plan decisions. This alternative was the No Action Alternative required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

The Production Alternative was designed to continue multiple-use management of the public lands with the objective of promoting the development, production, and transportation of those resources which provide minerals, food, timber and fiber.

The Conservation Alternative was designed to continue multiple-use management of the public lands with the objective of promoting conservation and protection of resources such as wilderness, cultural sites, wildlife habitats, watersheds, and recreation areas.

The Preferred Alternative was developed based on an analysis of the other three alternatives. It was modified as a result of public input and became the Proposed Plan accompanied by the final environmental impact statement. The Proposed Plan (Preferred Alternative) is the environmentally preferable alternative. No protests were received on this proposed plan/Final EIS and it has been selected as the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Management Plan. This alternative (as well as the other alternatives) proposes areas for special designations. The

final decision, as described in Chapter Two of the attached RMP, selects four areas for special designation. These areas are the Escalante Canyon ACEC (Management Unit 12) 1895 acres; the Fairview RNA/ACEC (Management Unit 13) 377 acres; the Needle Rock ONA/ACEC

(Management Unit 14) 80 acres and the Adobe Badlands ONA/ACEC (Management Unit 15) 6783 acres.

MITIGATION

The RMP has been designed to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects to the extent possible. Specific mitigation measures are described by management unit in Chapter Two of the attached RMP.

MONITORING

A monitoring program which includes two levels of monitoring has been developed for the RMP. The first level of monitoring is designed to track the implementation of the plan and is outlined in Chapter One of the RMP. The second level of monitoring is designed to assure that the desired results of the plan are being achieved and to identify needed management changes if they are not. This second level is described in Chapter Three of the attached plan by resource.

July 26, 1989

Date

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

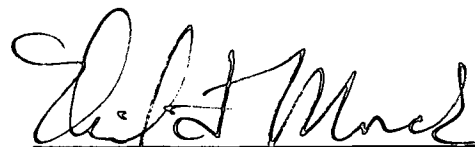
The views of the public have been sought throughout the planning and decision-making process. Public participation is summarized in Chapter One of the RMP.

CONSISTENCY

The plan is consistent with plans and policies of state and local governments, of other federal agencies, and of the Department of the Interior.

AVAILABILITY OF THE PLAN

Copies of the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Management Plan are available from the Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area, 2505 South Townsend Avenue, Montrose, Colorado 81401, telephone (303) 249-7791. Copies may also be obtained from the BLM Montrose District Office, 2465 S. Townsend Avenue, Montrose, Colorado 81401 or from the BLM Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215.




Colorado State Director
Bureau of Land Management

UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared by

**U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado State Office
Montrose District
Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area**



Colorado State Director
Bureau of Land Management

July 26, 1989

Date

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MAP LIST

Resource Management Plan

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This Resource Management Plan (RMP) contains the land use decisions, terms, and conditions for guiding future management actions within the Uncompahgre Basin Planning Area. All uses and activities within this area shall conform to the decisions, terms, and conditions, described in this plan.

The RMP describes implementation priorities by resource as well as monitoring which will track plan implementation and effectiveness. The RMP also outlines the modification process should changes to present decisions be needed.

In addition to this RMP, a final wilderness environmental impact statement (EIS) and wilderness study report (WSR) are being prepared. The final EIS and WSR will be submitted to Congress for legislative action.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The primary purpose of the RMP is to update and integrate the BLM's land use planning for the area into a single, comprehensive land use plan providing the overall framework for managing and allocating public land resources in the Uncompahgre Basin planning area over the next ten to twelve years.

In addition to identifying management direction within the planning area, the RMP meets several specific objectives. It (1) identifies federal coal lands that are acceptable for further leasing consideration, acceptable for further leasing consideration with stipulations, or unacceptable for leasing; (2) analyzes the suitability of three Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) for inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation Sys-

tem (NWPS); and (3) identifies public land to be designated as open, closed, or limited to off-road vehicle use.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER BLM PLANNING LEVELS

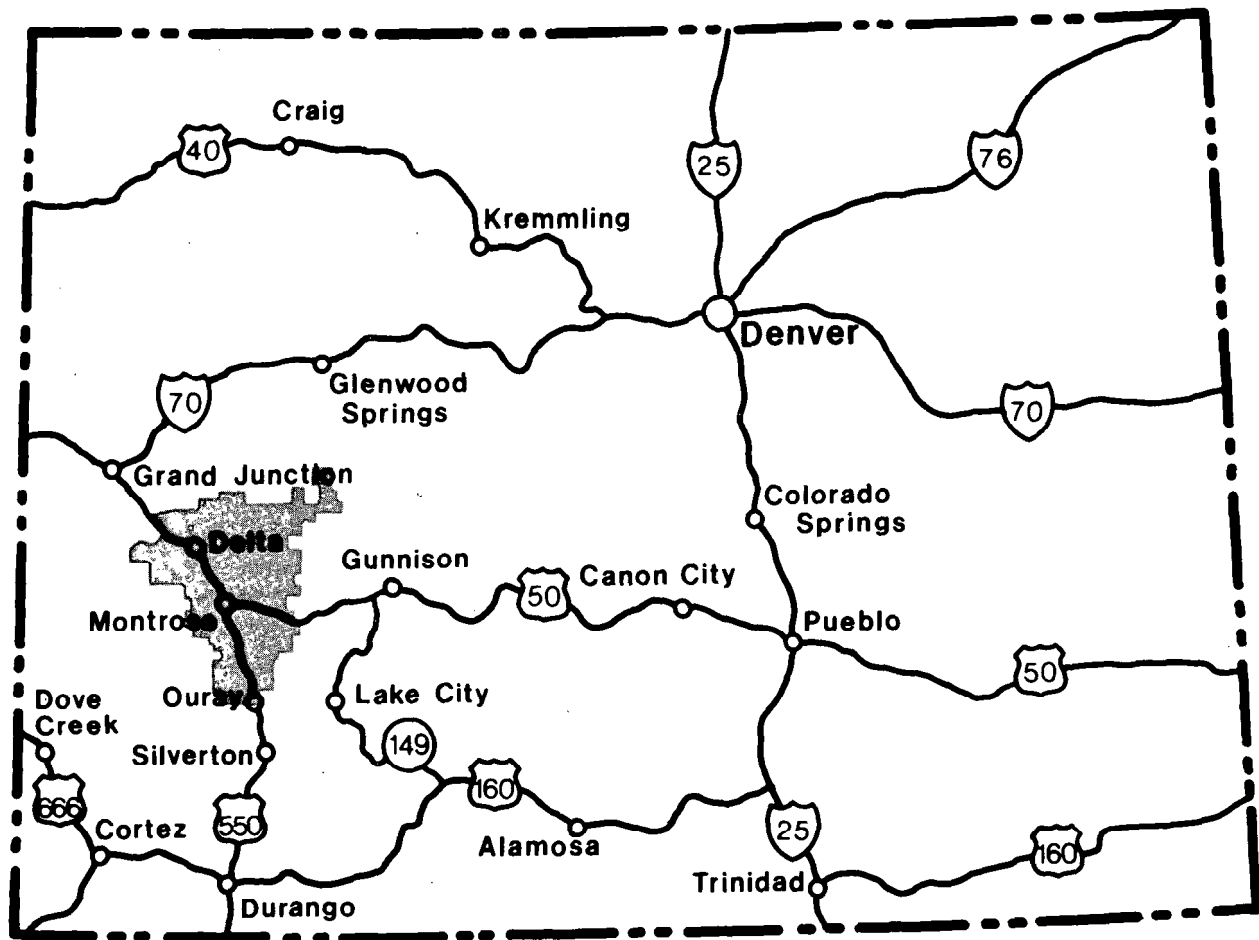
Development of a RMP occurs within the framework of the BLM planning system. The planning system is subdivided into three distinct tiers for operational purposes: policy planning, land use planning, and activities or program-specific planning. The Council on Environmental Quality regulations provided for tiering to aid compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500-1508). This plan satisfies the requirements for the land-use tier of planning.

SETTING

The Uncompahgre Basin planning area is a geographic division of the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area (UBRA) of the BLM's Montrose District. The planning area is located in west-central Colorado in portions of Delta, Gunnison, Mesa, Montrose, and Ouray counties (See Figure 1-1). It is bordered in part by the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests. Figure 1-2 depicts the planning area boundaries.

The planning area encompasses approximately 1.38 million acres. The BLM has administrative responsibility for the public lands and resources on 483,077 surface acres and 755,923 acres of subsurface federal mineral estate. Table 1 details surface and subsurface ownership within the planning area by county.

COLORADO



 Planning Area

Figure 1-1

UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN PLANNING AREA

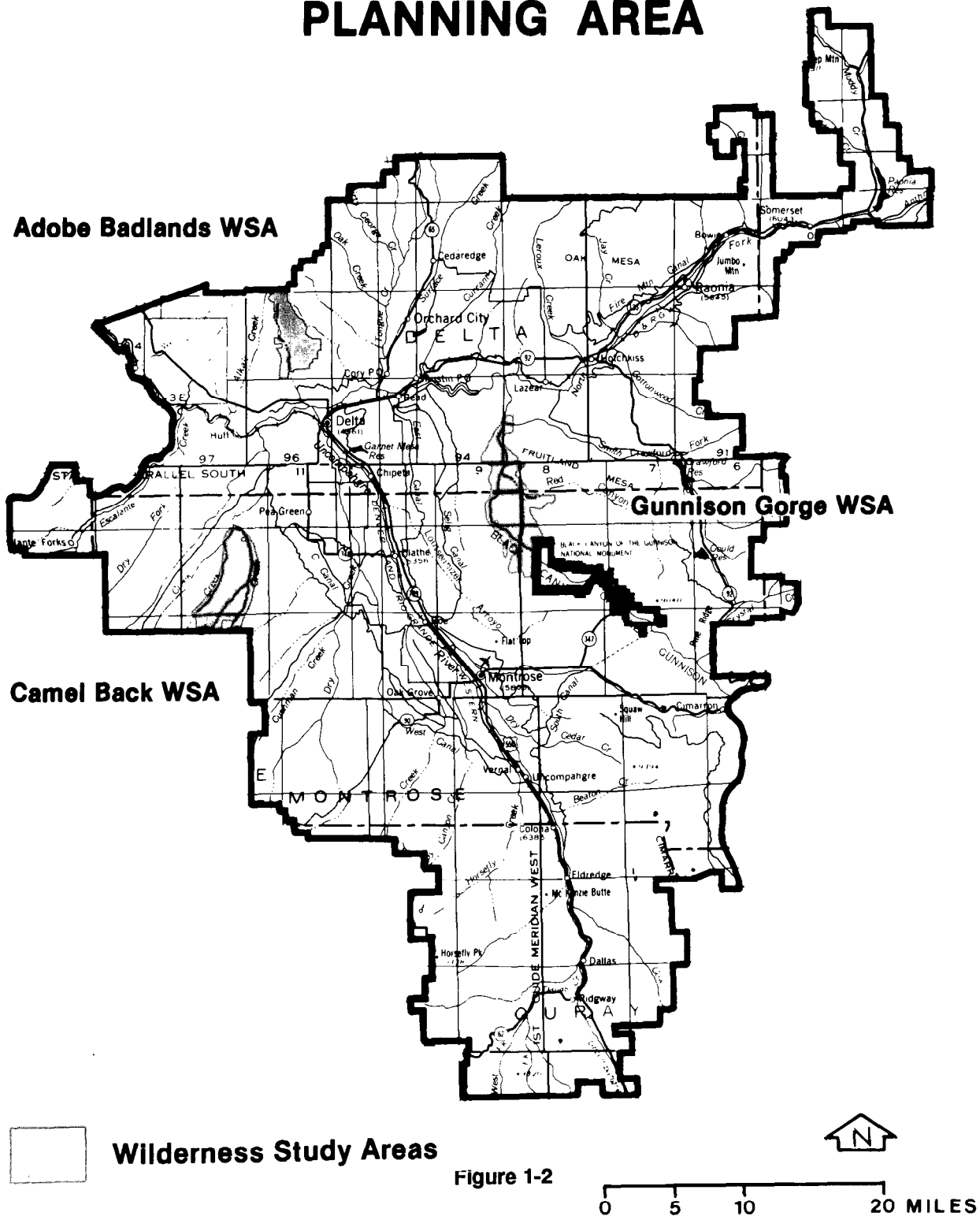


Table 1
OWNERSHIP STATUS IN THE PLANNING AREA
IN ACRES OF SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE ESTATE

	COUNTY					
	DELTA	GUNNISON	MESA	MONTROSE	OURAY	TOTAL
1. SURFACE ESTATE						
FEDERAL LAND ¹						
BLM	181,187	13,515	14,190	248,750	25,435	483,077
USFS	-	140	-	-	-	140
NPS	-	-	-	12,990	-	12,990
STATE LAND ²						
DOW	4,332	-	-	3,338	4,547	12,217
OTHER	-	-	-	-	680	680
PRIVATE LAND	326,207	55,512	1,912	326,282	163,615	873,528
TOTAL SURFACE ACRES	511,726	69,167	16,102	591,360	194,277	1,382,632
2. SUBSURFACE ESTATE ³						
FEDERAL ESTATE						
ALL MINERALS	247,712	42,742	14,255	337,447	45,972	688,128
COAL	16,080	11,432	-	16,495	4,852	48,859
OIL, GAS, AND COAL	3,060	1,422	-	1,270	2,200	7,952
OIL AND GAS	4,370	-	-	4,002	2,282	10,654
3/4 FEDERAL MINERALS	130	-	-	200	-	330
TOTAL ACRES OF FEDERAL SUBSURFACE	271,352	55,596	14,255	359,414	55,306	755,923

¹ BLM = Bureau of Land Management; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; NPS = National Park Service

² DOW = Colorado Division of Wildlife

³ The BLM administers subsurface federal estate underlying private, state, and other federal lands.

IMPLEMENTATION

Decisions in the RMP will be implemented over a period of years and must be tied to the BLM budgeting process. Therefore, priorities have been established for each resource to guide the order of implementation. The priorities for each program will be reviewed annually to help develop the annual work plan commitments for the coming year. The priorities may be revised based upon new administrative policy, new Departmental directives, or new Bureau goals. The priorities of implementation are presented, by resource, in Chapter Three.

MONITORING

The RMP will be monitored to determine its implementation status and its effectiveness in meeting desired results. An annual status report, which summarizes implementation tasks completed and implementation problems encountered, will be prepared. The status report will also document plan maintenance items, adjustments and revisions which have been completed, and will be available upon request. Individual resources will be monitored as outlined in Chapter Three of this document.

MAINTENANCE

The RMP will be maintained as necessary to reflect minor changes in data. Maintenance will be limited to refining or documenting a previously approved decision. It shall not expand the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the plan. Maintenance will be documented in the annual status report. Formal public involvement will not be necessary to maintain the RMP.

AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS

The RMP may be amended or revised if major changes are necessary. Monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, or a proposed action resulting in a

change in the scope, terms, or conditions of the plan, would warrant an amendment or revision. An amendment will be analyzed either in an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. The public and other agencies will be included in the amendment and revision processes.

VALID EXISTING RIGHTS

The RMP does not repeal valid existing rights on public lands. Valid existing rights are those claims or rights to public land that take precedence over the actions in this plan. As an example, a mining claim located prior to the preparation of this plan in an area withdrawn from mineral entry through the plan may be valid. Valid existing rights may be held by other federal agencies or by private individuals or companies.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL/INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Throughout the planning process, concerns and interests of all publics were addressed in a variety of public participation activities. The area manager, RMP team leader, and team members met with county commissioners, special interest groups, the Montrose BLM District Advisory Council (representatives who advise the District Manager on local public land issues), and other concerned citizens.

On July 28, 1983, a Notice of Intent was submitted to the Federal Register. This notice began the formal planning process. Invitations to participate in the planning process were sent to individuals, organizations, agencies, special interest groups, the media, business interests, academic institutions, and individuals. The general public was informed through news releases.

All publics were invited to attend a series of public scoping meetings held in August 1983 in Montrose, Delta, and Hotchkiss. The purpose of the meetings was to explain the objectives and

goals of the RMP and identify resource management issues. Issue statements and comments were accepted from the public by mail and at the scoping meetings. Land tenure adjustments, off-road vehicle use, and recreation, wilderness, and forestry issues received the most response.

The first RMP newsletter was published in March 1985 and mailed to about 700 addresses. A second newsletter was published and mailed in December 1985.

The public was invited to comment on three draft resource management alternatives (the Continuation of Current Management, Production, and Conservation alternatives) at a series of Open House Meetings held in Montrose, Delta, and Paonia in January 1986. Comments received were considered in finalizing these alternatives and in formulating the BLM's Preferred Alternative.

The draft RMP/EIS was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency in July of 1987.

Notice of availability of the draft and announcement of public hearings was published in the Federal Register on August 7, 1987; page 29445. The public was provided a 90-day comment period on the Draft RMP/EIS.

News releases also provided information concerning the Draft RMP/EIS and the public hearings which were held in Hotchkiss, Colorado, on September 22, 1987; in Lakewood, Colorado, on September 24, 1987; and in Montrose, Colorado, on September 29, 1987.

Fifty-one (51) persons testified at the public hearings. One hundred and seventy-three (173) persons, groups, or agencies submitted written comments. Both comments and responses were published in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Notice of availability of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS was published in the Federal Register on October 7, 1988; page 39538. This notice announced a 30-day protest period. No protests were received.

Planning Issues and Associated Resource Decisions
(All other resource decisions are identified in Chapter 2)

RESOURCE	PLANNING ISSUE	RESOURCE DECISION
LANDS	1. Identify lands suitable for disposal or lands that should be retained in public ownership.	A total of 143 tracts of public land totalling 11,026 acres are identified for further consideration for disposal. The remaining 472,050 will be retained in public ownership.
	2. Identify non-federal lands that would best serve public needs and interests if in public ownership.	If available, private lands may be acquired in Management Units 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 11 (see page 29 for acquisition criteria)
COAL	3. Identify those areas within the Paonia/Somerset and Bookcliffs coal areas which would be suitable for further leasing consideration. Determine areas where coal development could result in conflicts with water needs and/or water rights. Categorize lease areas with consideration for potential development problems and management conflicts.	83,334 acres of Federal coal estate in the Paonia/Somerset Cimarron Ridge and Bookcliffs coal areas are identified as suitable for further coal leasing consideration.
WATER QUALITY (SALINITY)	4. Identify major source areas contributing to the salinity problem in the Colorado River drainage. Determine uses that contribute salinity and develop measures to curtail the problem.	Public lands totalling 26,547 acres will be intensively managed to reduce salinity loads in the Colorado River drainage.
FORESTRY	5. Identify those woodlands in the planning area which will be managed predominantly for either forage production or woodland products.	Commercial forest on 3,127 acres and suitable woodlands on 24,255 acres would be intensively managed for forest products. Seasonal restrictions would apply on 1,606 acres of commercial forest.

RESOURCE	PLANNING ISSUE	RESOURCE DECISION
RECREATION	6. Determine if development of the proposed Storm King Peak Ski areas would be compatible with wildlife habitat, timber production, and coal production.	The Storm King Peak area will be managed to enhance its use as an elk calving area.
OFF-ROAD VEHICLE USE	7. Considering resource values and current recreation activities and use, delineate ORV areas within the planning area with open or closed or limited designation. Identify any restrictions to be applied in areas recommended for limited use.	A total of 224,276 acres is open to ORV use and 38,600 acres is closed to ORV use. Vehicle use on 56,974 acres is limited to designated roads and trails yearlong and another 163,227 acres has seasonal limited designations.
WILDERNESS	8. Determine if any of the three WSAs, or portions thereof, should be recommended as suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Identify alternative management for those areas not recommended for wilderness designation.	<p>Recommend the Gunnison Gorge WSA (21,038 acres) as suitable for wilderness designation. Recommend both the Camelback WSA (10,402 acres) and the Adobe Badlands WSA (10,425 acres) as non-suitable for wilderness designation.</p> <p>Manage the Camelback area with emphasis on riparian/aquatic system management, wildlife habitat, and livestock grazing. Close the entire area to ORV use. Manage 6,783 acres of the Adobe Badlands WSA as an ONA/ACEC to protect the scenic qualities and T&E plants, and to reduce active erosion. Manage the remainder of the Adobe Badlands WSA (3,642 acres) as wildlife habitat.</p>

CHAPTER TWO

THE UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Chapter Two displays the land use decisions by Management Unit (A management unit is a geographically defined area which will be managed for a stated objective). It identifies the management objective for each unit and describes the management actions which will be allowed, limited, or excluded to meet the stated objective. It is the Proposed Plan as described in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

A map identifying the location or locations of each Management Unit is provided in the pocket inside the back cover. Crucial deer and elk winter range and bald eagle hunting habitat are identified on unpublished maps located in the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area Office.

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. All actions will comply with current state and federal regulations, standards, and policies.
2. Site-specific activity plans will be developed or revised, if necessary, to provide detailed management guidance for all management units except the general resource management unit.
3. Site-specific Environmental Analyses (EAs) and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), if required, will be developed for all management plans and projects within the planning area. Emphasis will be placed on analyzing plans and/or projects comprehensively for each management unit.
4. Lands cases generated by other agencies, individuals, and entities will be analyzed and processed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with guidance provided by this plan.

5. Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) land use classifications currently under lease will be retained with the exception of the Delta County and Montrose County landfills.

6. All Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will be managed to be consistent with the Wilderness Interim Management Policy until the final Congressional decision on wilderness designation or non-designation is made.

7. All areas designated as an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) or a Research Natural Area (RNA) are also designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

STANDARD MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

Some resource management programs will be standard throughout the planning area under the RMP. Unless changes in or additions to standard management directions are specifically addressed in the management prescription for each management unit, these resources, programs, and activities will be managed as follows:

Air Quality. Activities and projects on public land will comply with applicable local, state, and federal air quality regulations. Mitigation to minimize air quality degradation will be incorporated into project proposals as appropriate.

Coal. Federal coal estate will be identified as acceptable for further leasing consideration.

Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources. Federal oil, gas, and geothermal estate on both federal surface and split-estate lands will be open to leasing with standard lease terms. Other con-

ditions for leasing such as no surface occupancy and seasonal stipulations (see Appendix A) are assigned in each management unit prescription; special stipulations and conditions also apply to federal surface and split-estate lands. Any special stipulations (i.e., seasonal closures) prescribed for a management unit will also apply to seismic and drilling activities.

Resource information for split-estate lands, upon which the recommended stipulations are based, has not been verified by the BLM. Verification will occur during review of Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs). On-site inspection and consultation with the surface owner and operator may reveal that (1) the impacts addressed by the stipulation will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level, or (2) the resources of concern are not present. Upon either of these determinations by the Authorized Officer, the stipulations can be waived, modified, or excepted without public notice other than that provided for the APD. Consultation with the surface owner also requires the consideration of private uses of the surface. If, after on-site inspection and consultation, it is determined by the Authorized Officer that conditions necessary to avoid impacts to private resources would adversely impact the public resources addressed by these stipulations, the impacts will be assessed. If, based upon such assessment, the Authorized Officer makes a decision to substantially change or waive one or more stipulations, a 30-day public review period will be provided in addition to the public notice period for receipt of the APD. (These two 30-day notice and review periods may overlap.)

Locatable Minerals. All existing withdrawals that segregate federal mineral estate from location and entry under the general mining laws will be recommended for retention. Federal mineral estate in areas not under withdrawal will be open to entry and location.

Mineral Materials. Federal mineral estate will be open to disposal of mineral materials.

Soils and Water Resources. Water quality and erosion conditions will be inventoried and monitored. Measures designed to minimize erosion and water quality deterioration will be required in site specific plans for surface-disturbing land use activities. The area will be open to land treatments and development of in-channel structures and project facilities.

Riparian/Aquatic Systems. Riparian zones and aquatic habitats will be inventoried and monitored where necessary to provide information to determine proper management. Vegetation conditions and streambank cover will be maintained or improved. Measures designed to minimize site-specific riparian and aquatic deterioration will be required in site specific plans for surface-disturbing land use activities.

Threatened and Endangered Species. Threatened and endangered species and unique plant associations will be inventoried and monitored where necessary to provide information to determine proper management. Clearances will be conducted on all proposed surface-disturbing activities and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be consulted as required. Measures designed to protect threatened and endangered species and their habitat will be required in all land use activity plans. Supplemental releases and reintroduction of federal and state listed endangered, threatened, and candidate species may be authorized following environmental analysis and consultation with the USFWS, the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW), and other affected parties.

Wildlife Habitat. Wildlife forage allocations will remain at current levels until studies determine adjustments are needed to achieve management objectives. Additional forage allocations will be divided equally between wildlife and livestock grazing. Wildlife habitat monitoring studies will be established and/or maintained on all crucial winter ranges. The planning area will be open to land treatments and project facility development. Existing wildlife facilities and land

treatments will be maintained. Supplemental releases and reintroduction of native or naturalized fish and wildlife species (excluding federal or state listed endangered, threatened, or candidate species) may be authorized by the District Manager following environmental analysis.

Livestock Grazing. Suitable public lands will be available for livestock grazing use. Livestock utilization will be managed at current forage allocation levels until studies indicate adjustments are needed to achieve management objectives. New or additional available forage will be divided equally between livestock and wildlife. Existing livestock facilities will be maintained. Existing allotment management plans (AMPs) will be updated as needed and new AMPs will be developed. New livestock facilities and land treatment projects will be developed if needed to achieve AMP objectives. Vegetation condition and trend monitoring studies will be established and/or maintained. Maximum sustained livestock utilization levels of key forage species will be 50 percent. Allotment categorization will determine management and monitoring intensity.

Forestry. Suitable commercial forest lands and pinyon-juniper woodlands will be managed for sustained yield production within the allowable cut restrictions determined by the Timber Production Capabilities Classification (TPCC) inventory.

Recreation. Public lands will be managed for extensive and diverse recreational use.

Off-Road Vehicles. Public lands will be open to off-road vehicle (ORV) use.

Cultural Resources. Cultural and historical sites will be inventoried. Clearances will be conducted on sites of all proposed surface-disturbing activities. Measures designed to protect cultural and historical resources will be developed in consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the State

Historic Preservation Officer and will be required in all land use activity plans.

Paleontological Resources. Paleontological resources will be inventoried and appropriate protective measures will be developed if necessary.

Visual Resources. Public lands will be managed under current visual resource management (VRM) classifications and guidelines.

Major Utilities. Public lands will be open to development of major utility facilities. Stipulations and mitigating measures will be developed on a case-by-case basis.

Powersite Withdrawals. Pending determination of potential, existing powersite withdrawals will be maintained. These lands will not be subject to further consideration for disposal. No significant long-term investments will be made on these lands unless the investment could be recovered prior to development.

Access. In addition to the specific access needs identified in the management unit prescriptions, the access needs identified in the resource area's transportation plan will be acquired as opportunities arise.

Fire Management. Any fire which occurs in a fire use category area before a prescribed burn plan is approved, or which is not within the limits of the prescription, or which threatens life or property will be suppressed as a conditional suppression area fire.

DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC LANDS

A total of 143 tracts of public land totalling 11,026 acres have been identified for further consideration for disposal through sale or exchange under the RMP.

Prior to disposal, resources within identified tracts will be managed according to the management prescription for the management unit in which they are located. Minimal funds, if any, will

be spent on improvements on these lands. Federal mineral estate will be conveyed with surface estate where it would be in the public interest.

Table 2
MANAGEMENT UNITS

MANAGEMENT UNIT	ACRES OF PUBLIC SURFACE	PERCENTAGE OF THE PLANNING AREA ¹	IMPORTANT RESOURCES, VALUES, OR LAND USES
1	186,810	39%	Livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, recreation, woodlands
2	67,320	14%	Wildlife habitat, coal, woodlands
3	47,607	10%	Woodlands, wildlife habitat, livestock grazing
4	40,792	8%	Recreation, soils, woodlands
5	24,177	5%	Soils, recreation, oil and gas
6	21,038	4%	Wilderness, recreation, T&E species
7	17,232	4%	Coal, wildlife habitat
8	8,942	2%	Recreation, soils
9	6,320	1%	Riparian/aquatic habitat, livestock grazing
10	3,292	Less than 1%	Wildlife habitat, coal, recreation, commercial timber
11	1,990	Less than 1%	Wildlife habitat, recreation
12	1,895	Less than 1%	Recreation, T&E species
13	377	Less than 1%	T&E species, soils
14	80	Less than 1%	Recreation, scientific values
15	6,783	1%	T&E species, scenic values, soils
16	48,422	10%	General land uses

¹ Percentages are rounded to whole numbers.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 1

186,810 Acres of Public Surface; 39 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 1 consists of 186,810 acres of public land located primarily on the northeast-facing slopes of the Uncompahgre Plateau north of Colorado Highway 90. The area's range of elevations gives it a high value for both summer and winter livestock grazing.

Public lands within the management unit will be managed as "I" category (150,114 acres), "M" category (25,727 acres), and "C" category (8,950 acres) grazing allotments. Also, 2,019 acres that are presently unallotted for livestock use will be available for grazing application.

The management unit will be managed to improve vegetation conditions and forage availability for livestock grazing. Land treatment projects and other facilities designed to improve livestock forage and distribution will be developed. Intensive monitoring studies will be established and maintained on all "I" and "M" category allotments. Existing AMPs will be updated as needed and new AMPs will be developed for allotments without plans. As additional forage becomes available, livestock will have priority for allocation. Relinquished, cancelled, or acquired livestock grazing permits will be reissued according to regulations.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. Seasonal stipulations on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect from December 1 through April 30 on 64,815 acres (federal surface) and 560 acres (split-estate) of crucial deer and elk winter range, and on 3,757 acres (federal surface) and 63 acres (split-estate) used by bald eagles for hunting habitat. Variances to this seasonal stipulation may be granted (see Appendix A).

Locatable Minerals. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) withdrawal on Fruitland Mesa and both the BOR Dominguez withdrawal and the

BLM powersite classifications along the Gunnison River downstream of Delta will be recommended for revocation to allow for mineral exploration and development, facilitate resource management, and permit long-term land use planning.

Soils and Water Resources. Non-conflicting (does not conflict with the objective of the management unit) erosion control objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new and existing AMPs. In-channel structures and land treatment projects designed to reduce runoff and soil erosion will be developed.

Wildlife Habitat. Non-conflicting wildlife habitat management objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new and existing AMPs. Existing wildlife habitat projects will be maintained. Bighorn sheep may be transplanted into the Winter Mesa area if they will not conflict with current and future livestock grazing forage allocations. Wildlife will have first priority for all additional forage made available as a result of rangeland improvement projects designed to improve wildlife habitat funded by non-BLM sources.

Forestry. Woodland harvest areas will be managed for increased forage production and will be compatible with AMPs.

Recreation. River access will be developed at the Escalante Bridge. Maps and informational materials on river use will be provided. The BLM will manage recreation use in a manner that will minimize recreational impacts on interspersed and adjacent private land.

Off-Road Vehicles. A total of 7,240 acres in the Winter Mesa/Roubideau Creek area will be closed to ORV use. Vehicle use on crucial deer and elk winter range (64,815 acres) will be limited to designated roads and trails from December 1 through April 30 if necessary to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk. The remainder of the management unit will be open to ORV use.

Cultural Resources. A total of 5,848 acres of public land between Colorado Highway 90 and the Big Sandy Wash will undergo a Class III cultural Inventory to determine the significance and location of high-value archeological sites. Upon completion of the Inventory and data analysis, some of these sites may be assigned a special designation and a management plan may be developed.

Visual Resources. The management unit will be managed under VRM Class III guidelines, except for Escalante Canyon which will be managed under VRM Class II guidelines to protect its scenic qualities.

Acquisition of Non-Federal Lands. If they are available, non-federal lands that would improve livestock management and increase crucial deer and elk winter range may be acquired.

Access. Public road access will be acquired into the Olathe Reservoir area for hunting and other recreational purposes. Public trail access will be acquired on the McCarty Trail in lower Escalante Canyon to provide additional access into the Dominguez Canyon WSA.

Fire Management. A total of 97,543 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category, with 8,657 acres identified for intensive suppression and 88,886 acres identified for conditional suppression. A total of 89,267 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed on these areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 2

67,320 Acres of Public Surface; 14 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 2 consists of 67,320 acres of public land located primarily on the southern end of the Uncompahgre Plateau and in the lower

elevations of the North Fork Valley. These areas have large wintering deer and elk populations. Approximately half of the management unit is considered crucial deer and elk winter range. A portion of the unit, in the Camel Back/Roubideau Creek area, is suitable habitat for desert bighorn sheep.

The management unit will be managed to improve the areas' capabilities to support wintering deer, elk, and bighorn sheep populations. Land treatment projects and other facilities designed to improve the quality and quantity of winter habitat will be developed. Wildlife will have first priority for all additional forage made available as a result of BLM habitat improvement projects. All other land uses will be permitted if they will not degrade the areas' winter range capabilities. Disturbances will be minimized from December 1 through April 30 on crucial deer and elk winter range (37,007 acres). Habitat in the Camel Back/Roubideau Creek area will be available for possible introduction of desert bighorn sheep.

Coal. Federal coal estate will be open to leasing. Within crucial deer and elk winter range, seasonal stipulations on new road and facility construction may be necessary from December 1 through April 30 to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. Within crucial deer and elk winter range (37,007 acres of federal surface and 8,850 acres of split-estate), seasonal stipulations on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect from December 1 through April 30 to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk. Variances to this seasonal stipulation may be granted (see Appendix A).

Mineral Materials. Federal mineral estate will be open to disposal of mineral materials. Within crucial deer and elk winter range, seasonal restrictions on disposal activities may be necessary from December 1 through April 30 to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk.

Soils and Water Resources. Non-conflicting erosion control objectives, projects, and mitigation measures will be incorporated into new wildlife habitat management plans (HMPs). Land treatment and erosion control projects will be permitted if they are compatible with wildlife habitat management objectives.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing will continue at current forage allocation levels and seasons of use unless studies determine adjustments are needed. Livestock will have first priority for all additional forage made available as a result of livestock operator-funded rangeland improvement projects. Non-conflicting livestock management objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new wildlife HMPs. Facility development and land treatment projects will be permitted if they would be compatible with wildlife habitat management objectives.

Forestry. The management unit will be available for woodland product harvests. On 37,007 acres of crucial deer and elk winter range, seasonal restrictions on harvest may be necessary from December 1 through April 30 to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk. Woodland harvest will be designed to increase forage production and will be compatible with wildlife habitat management objectives.

Off-Road Vehicles. A total of 2,482 acres in the Camel Back/upper Roubideau Creek drainage area will be closed to ORV use. Vehicle use in the remainder of the management unit will be limited to designated roads and trails from December 1 through April 30. Variances to this seasonal limitation may be granted if ORV use would not result in any negative impacts on wintering deer and elk.

Visual Resources. The management unit will be managed under VRM Class III guidelines.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be open to development of major utility facilities. Within crucial deer and elk winter range, con-

struction activities may be restricted from December 1 through April 30 if necessary to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk.

Acquisition of Non-Federal Lands. If they are available, non-federal lands that are necessary for effective management of crucial deer and elk winter range may be acquired.

Access. Public access will be acquired into the McDonald Mesa, Roatcap-Jay Creek, Spaulding Peak/Dry Creek, Oak Mesa, and Oak Ridge areas for hunting and other recreational uses, wildlife habitat management, and timber and woodlands management.

Fire Management. A total of 53,502 acres of public surface will be managed under the fire suppression category, with 48,118 acres identified for intensive suppression and 5,384 acres identified for conditional suppression. A total of 13,818 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed in these areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 3

47,607 Acres of Public Surface; 10 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 3 consists of 47,607 acres of public land located primarily on the northeast-facing slopes of the Uncompahgre Plateau. The management unit contains some of the most productive pinyon-juniper woodland sites in the planning area which are used extensively for livestock grazing and are valuable deer and elk habitat.

The management unit will be managed for sustained yield production of the woodland resource within the allowable cut restrictions determined by the TPCC Inventory (23,206 acres).

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. A seasonal stipulation on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect on crucial deer and elk winter range (28,552 acres of federal surface and 25 acres of split-estate) from December 1 through April 30 if necessary to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk. Variances to this seasonal stipulation may be granted (see Appendix A).

Soils and Water Resources. Non-conflicting erosion control objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new forest management plans (FMPs). Existing erosion control projects will be maintained and new projects developed if they will not decrease the woodland base.

Wildlife Habitat. Non-conflicting wildlife habitat management objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new FMPs. Existing wildlife habitat projects will be maintained and new projects developed if they will not decrease the woodland base.

Livestock Grazing. Non-conflicting livestock grazing management objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new FMPs. Existing livestock projects will be maintained and new projects developed if they will not decrease the woodland base.

Off-Road Vehicles. The management unit will be open to ORV use except in crucial deer and elk winter range (28,552 acres) where vehicle use will be limited to designated roads and trails from December 1 through April 30 if necessary to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk. Use of ORVs for woodland management and harvest purposes will be authorized year-round.

Access. Public access will be acquired into the Beaver Hill and Linscott Canyon areas for woodland harvest and recreation purposes.

Fire Management. A total of 25,162 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category, with 21,187 acres identified

for intensive suppression and 3,975 acres identified for conditional suppression. A total of 22,445 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed on these areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 4

40,792 Acres of Public Surface; 8 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 4 consists of the 40,792 acres of public lands surrounding the Gunnison Gorge. The management unit is characterized by a diversity of landscapes and high-value recreation opportunities. The need to protect both the quality and diversity of recreation opportunities and to facilitate recreation use will be recognized as important during the formulation of management decisions affecting the area.

The management unit will be managed as the Gunnison Gorge Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). Maps, interpretive materials, and facilities will be developed. Recreation use will be monitored and possibly restricted as necessary to protect natural features and recreation opportunities.

Lands in the Peach Valley area (15,610 acres) will be managed for ORV recreation opportunities. A minimum of restrictions would be placed on surface-disturbing activities and a high concentration of recreation users will be permitted within this area.

Motorized access to the remainder of the management unit (25,182 acres) will be limited to designated road and trails, the majority of which are primitive in character. This area will be managed to maintain a predominantly natural environment with low but evident human concentrations and impacts.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. A seasonal stipulation on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect from December 1 through April 30 on crucial deer and elk winter range (8,077 acres of federal surface and 280 acres of split-estate). Variances in this seasonal restriction may be granted (see Appendix A).

Locatable Minerals. Federal mineral estate will be open to entry and location. The BLM protective withdrawal (PLO 5261; September 15, 1972) will be revoked and the BOR withdrawal on Fruitland Mesa will be recommended for revocation. Revoking these mineral withdrawals will allow for mineral exploration and development, facilitate resource management, and permit long-term land use planning.

Soils and Water Resources. The Elephant Skin Wash salinity control project will be maintained to reduce saline runoff. Elephant Skin Wash will be protected from surface-disturbing activities.

Wildlife Habitat. Bighorn sheep habitat in the Smith Fork Canyon (2,250 acres) will be monitored and protected. Activities and land uses that are consistent with maintaining the necessary forage and isolated habitat requirements of bighorn sheep will be permitted.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing will continue at current forage allocation levels and seasons of use unless studies indicate that adjustments are needed. The 140-acre Gunnison Forks habitat management area will remain unallotted for livestock grazing. Livestock forage utilization will be limited to 35 percent in the Elephant Skin Wash area (2,370 acres) if necessary to protect soils by maintaining an optimum basal ground cover.

Forestry. A 1,255-acre portion (in the Black Ridge area) of the 2,500 acres of harvestable woodlands within the management unit will be available for harvest. This area will be closed to harvest from December 1 through April 30 to

protect crucial deer and elk winter range. The remaining harvestable woodlands (1,245 acres) will be closed to harvest.

Off-Road Vehicles. A total of 15,610 acres in the Peach Valley area will be open to ORV use. To protect natural and scenic values, vehicle use in the Elephant Skin Wash area and the remainder of the management unit will be limited to designated roads and trails yearlong.

Visual Resources. The 15,610 acres open to ORV use will be managed under VRM Class IV guidelines.

Major Utilities. A total of 2,462 acres in the Smiths Mountain and Gunnison Forks areas will be open to but not preferred for development of new major utility facilities. These lands may be utilized for major utility development if there are no feasible alternatives. The remainder of the management unit will be closed to new major utility development to protect natural and scenic values.

Acquisition of non-Federal lands. Actions will be initiated to acquire 2,200 acres of non-federal lands as identified in the Gunnison Gorge Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP), that are necessary to facilitate public access and enhance recreational values.

Access. Public access will be acquired along the Gunnison Gorge rim southwest of the Gunnison Forks and from Colorado Highway 92 to the Gunnison River in the Austin area for recreation purposes.

Fire Management. A total of 26,070 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified as conditional suppression areas. A total of 14,722 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed on these areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 5

24,177 Acres of Public Surface; 5 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 5, totalling 24,177 acres, consists of Mancos shale hills commonly known as the "adobes". These highly erodible soils, combined with a lack of protective vegetation, can produce sediment loads in local watersheds that are high in salinity. High precipitation runoff rates from the adobes contribute to overall salinity levels in the Upper Colorado River Basin. Salinity yields are increased within localized areas due to increased erosion from surface disturbing activities including ORV use and live-stock grazing.

The management unit will be managed to reduce salinity loads in the Upper Colorado River Basin. In-channel structures and land treatment projects designed to reduce runoff, erosion, and sedimentation will be developed, and surface protection measures will be implemented. Forage utilization will be managed to achieve the basal ground cover objectives identified in Table 3. Surface-disturbing activities will be curtailed from March 1 through May 31 when saturated soils are most vulnerable to damage. Activities and other land uses which are consistent with maintaining the soil and vegetative conditions necessary to reduce erosion and salt contributions to the river basin will be permitted.

Table 3
OBJECTIVES FOR PERCENT GROUND COVER WITHIN
MANAGEMENT UNIT 5

RANGE SITE	LOCATION	PERCENT BASAL GROUND COVER
Stony salt desert	North of Delta	10
Clayey salt desert	South of Hotchkiss	10
Salt flats	South of Hotchkiss	7
Clayey salt desert	Bone Mesa	10

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. A seasonal stipulation on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect from March 1 through May 31 to protect erodible and saline soils on 24,177 acres of federal surface and 4,155 acres of split-estate. Variances to this seasonal stipulation may be granted (see Appendix A).

Mineral Materials. Federal mineral estate will be open to mineral material activities except from March 1 through May 31 if necessary to protect wet soils.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing will be allowed except from March 20 to range readiness to protect plant species during the spring

growth period, and to prevent soil disturbance when saturated soils are most vulnerable to damage. If the basal ground cover is less than the objectives identified in Table 3 livestock forage utilization will be managed at 35 percent of key forage species to increase basal ground cover.

Off-Road Vehicles. To protect highly saline soils, vehicle use in the entire management unit will be limited to designated roads and trails yearlong.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be open to development of major utility facilities but no surface-disturbing activities will be permitted

from March 1 through May 31 if necessary to protect wet soils.

Fire Management. A total of 22,992 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified as conditional suppression areas. A total of 1,185 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed on these areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 6

21,038 Acres of Public Surface; 4 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 6 is the Gunnison Gorge WSA (CO-030-388). The WSA, totalling 21,038 acres, will be recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation. Until a final Congressional decision on wilderness designation or non-designation is made, the Gunnison Gorge WSA will be managed according to the Wilderness Interim Management Policy and the Gunnison Gorge RAMP.

During the wilderness intensive inventory, the Gunnison Gorge was determined to meet the wilderness size requirement of at least 5,000 acres, to be natural, and to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive/unconfined recreation. The scenic and wilderness canyon complex of the area has received considerable publicity and public interest. If designated as wilderness by Congress, activities and land uses that are consistent with preserving the natural condition and wilderness character of the area would be permitted.

Air Quality. The management unit would be managed within federal air quality Class II guidelines unless the State of Colorado reclassifies the area, or other areas, as a result of procedures prescribed in the Clean Air Act as amended in 1977. Under other state authorities, the Gunnison Gorge WSA is currently managed

as a Category I area where more restrictive sulfur dioxide requirements apply.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate would be closed to future leasing. There are no pre-FLPMA leases in the WSA. Development of any post-FLPMA leases in would be permitted only if activities would result in no impairment of wilderness characteristics.

Locatable Minerals. The management unit would be closed to mineral entry and location except for pre-FLPMA claims determined to have valid discoveries. The majority of the area (74 percent) is presently withdrawn from mineral entry.

Mineral Materials. The management unit would be closed to disposal of mineral materials.

Soils and Water Resources. Where natural recovery is unlikely, deteriorated watershed conditions would be restored if life, property, or wilderness values are threatened, or if serious depreciation of important environmental qualities outside the wilderness area is evident. Revegetation efforts would be limited to use of native or naturalized species. Whenever feasible, non-motorized access and project development methods would be required. Approval of the BLM Director would be required for all watershed restoration projects.

Threatened and Endangered Species. Threatened and endangered species research and habitat improvement would be permitted if activities are consistent with protection of wilderness values. Habitat would be managed for federally-listed bald eagles and peregrine falcons and state-listed river otters. Recreation use would be restricted if necessary for the protection of threatened and endangered species.

Wildlife Habitat. Wildlife habitat would be managed to allow for natural distribution, numbers, and interaction of indigenous wildlife and fish species. Developed facilities, if necessary for the continued existence or welfare of a wildlife

species, would be permissible if wilderness characteristics would not be impaired. Bighorn sheep habitat and deer and elk winter range would be managed in cooperation with the Colorado DOW. Supplemental releases of bighorn sheep would be permitted as identified in the 1986 reintroduction plan or its future amendments.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing and facility maintenance would be managed at levels and conditions established prior to wilderness designation. New rangeland improvements would be permissible if determined to be necessary for rangeland and/or wilderness protection.

Forestry. Woodland harvest and/or management would be permitted only for control of insects and disease if determined necessary to protect resources outside the management unit. There is a total of 337 acres of productive woodlands within the WSA that would be unavailable for harvest.

Recreation. Recreation use would be regulated as necessary to protect wilderness values. Highest priority would be given to low-impact recreation activities that could not be accommodated outside the wilderness environment. Opportunities for non-motorized recreation in a predominantly natural environment would be maintained. Facilities, improvements, and signs would be limited to those necessary to protect wilderness resources along with public health and safety. Permits would be required for all commercial recreation uses and, if necessary to protect wilderness values, for all non-commercial recreationists. Hunting, fishing, and recreational trapping would be permitted.

The river corridor would be managed to maintain very low human group concentrations and little overall evidence of human use. River-boat use would be limited to six to ten group encounters per day with no more than two (as per the 1988 Gunnison Gorge RAMP) commercially-outfitted trip allowed per day. Allocations between private and commercial river-boating use

would be made if necessary to protect wilderness values or to emphasize opportunities for specific recreational experiences such as self-reliance as opposed to guided and outfitted experiences.

Off-Road Vehicles. Vehicle use in general would be eliminated from the management unit. Vehicle use would be permitted in certain circumstances involving valid existing rights, livestock grazing, fire suppression, life-threatening emergencies, and wilderness area administration. The rugged canyon area has few vehicular access routes.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources. In most instances, cultural and paleontological resources would be subject to the forces of nature in the same manner as other wilderness resources. Study or management would not entail excavation, stabilization, or interpretation. Exceptions may be granted by the BLM State Director for unusually significant cultural or paleontological resources.

Visual Resources. The management unit would be managed under VRM Class I guidelines.

Major Utilities. The management unit would be closed to development of utility facilities. The area is not within the lands identified as needed for future major utility development in the 1980 and 1985 Western Regional Utility Corridor Study(s).

Hydroelectric Development. Several hydroelectric projects have been proposed for development on the Gunnison River which would be within or affect the WSA. Protective withdrawals have restricted major on-the-ground evaluations by the proponents. The existing powersite reserves and BOR withdrawals affecting the Gunnison Gorge would be recommended for revocation. However, the final determination on the status of these withdrawals will be made by the President and Congress.

Access. Public access to the WSA boundary in the Red Canyon area would be identified for acquisition.

Agricultural Development. No agricultural or related development would be permitted within the management unit. The BLM would recommend revocation of the portion of the BOR Fruitland Mesa withdrawal that is within the WSA.

Fire Management. A total of 21,038 acres would be managed under the fire-use category where fire would be utilized as a management tool. Only natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions would be allowed in this area.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 7

17,232 Acres of Public Surface; 4 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 7 consists of 54,474 acres of federal coal estate within the planning area and 1,756 acres of federal coal estate outside of the planning area. A 17,232-acre portion of this federal coal estate underlies federal surface estate.

The management unit will be managed for both existing and potential coal development. Development of existing coal leases will continue, and unleased federal coal will be identified as acceptable for further coal leasing consideration with a minimum of multiple-use restrictions. Activities and land uses that are consistent with maintaining existing coal operations and the potential for coal development will be permitted.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. A seasonal stipulation on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect from December 1 through April 30 on 1,730 acres (federal surface) of crucial deer and elk winter range, and on 1,637 acres of federal surface and 630 acres of split-estate lands used as hunting habitat by bald eagles. Variances in these

seasonal stipulations may be granted (see Appendix A).

Riparian/Aquatic Systems. Riparian/aquatic zones up to one-quarter mile wide will be protected. Activities that disturb these areas could be approved on a site-specific basis after consultation with affected entities and development of mitigating measures.

Wildlife Habitat. Wildlife will have priority for forage allocations on crucial deer and elk winter range (1,730 acres).

Forestry. All commercial forest lands and piñon-juniper woodlands that are suitable for harvest will be managed for sustained yield production within allowable cut restrictions determined by the TPCC inventory.

Off-Road Vehicles. Vehicle use in the riparian zones associated with Bear and Roatcap creeks will be limited to designated roads and trails yearlong. Vehicle use in crucial deer and elk winter range (1,730 acres) will be limited to designated roads and trails from December 1 through April 30 if necessary to reduce stress on wintering deer and elk.

Major Utilities. Corridors one-quarter mile wide and located on each side of Colorado Highway 133 will be open to development of major utility facilities. The remainder of the area would be closed to major utility facilities except for those needed for coal development. This management would greatly reduce the long-term conflicts between new utility facilities and the potential surface effects of coal mine subsidence.

Acquisition of Non-Federal Lands. If they are available, non-federal lands that are necessary for effective management of riparian zones along with crucial deer and elk winter range may be acquired.

Fire Management. A total of 14,910 acres of public land will be managed under the fire sup-

pression category and identified as intensive suppression areas. A total of 2,322 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire would be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed on this area.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 8

8,942 Acres of Public Surface; 2 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 8 is 8,942 acres of public land northeast of Delta that consists of Mancos shale (adobe badlands) hills with little vegetative cover. The area is suitable and utilized for ORV recreation. ORV activities typically involve local residents and occur during the spring, fall, and winter.

The management unit will be managed as open to ORV use. Recreational and competitive ORV use and a high concentration of recreation users will be permitted within the management unit. Facilities such as informational signs and motor-cycle loading ramps may be developed if constructed and maintained to BLM standards by local ORV organizations. A minimum of restrictions will be placed on surface-disturbing activities that do not impede or endanger ORV recreationists.

Prior to management of the area for ORV use, an inventory will be conducted to identify threatened and endangered plant populations. The management unit's proposed boundary will be adjusted to exclude threatened and endangered plants. If plants or plant communities cannot be excluded from the management unit, protective fencing or other measures will be implemented to protect the plants. The USFWS will be consulted.

Livestock Grazing. Grazing use will continue in the management unit but construction of facilities, such as livestock control fences, that

create safety hazards or impede free vehicle use will not be permitted.

Visual Resources. The management unit will be managed under VRM Class IV guidelines.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be open to development of major utility facilities.

Fire Management. A total of 8,942 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified as conditional suppression areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 9

6,320 Acres of Public Surface; 1 percent of the the Planning Area

The public land riparian zones that comprise Management Unit 9 occur throughout the planning area and are generally associated with perennial or intermittent streams. These areas (6,320 acres) have a very high productive capability and are very important in maintaining the water quality of the adjacent streams.

The management unit will be managed to restore and enhance riparian vegetation along 40 miles of streams. Objectives and projects designed to accelerate improvement of species diversity, streambank cover and stability, and in-stream structure, and to raise the water table will be incorporated into existing activity plans or developed in new riparian/aquatic system management plans. All areas will be intensively monitored for vegetation, aquatic habitat, and erosion conditions.

Coal. Coal development will be considered on a site-specific basis after consultation with affected entities and formulation of mitigating measures.

Mineral Materials. Federal mineral estate will be closed to disposal of mineral materials except

for sales which would result in negligible or no impacts to the riparian and aquatic systems.

Soils and Water Resources. Non-conflicting erosion control and water quality improvement objectives and projects will be incorporated into new riparian/aquatic system management plans.

Wildlife Habitat. Non-conflicting wildlife habitat management objectives, projects, and mitigating measures will be incorporated into new riparian/aquatic system management plans.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing use will be permitted in riparian zones except from March 1 through range readiness, during which time it would be eliminated to accelerate improvement of riparian vegetation. To improve the condition of riparian zones, management practices and principles will be established in activity plans. Utilization of 35 percent by weight of key forage species will be used as a general guidance for improvement; this may vary depending on the individual riparian system. Trailing use will be limited as much as possible and confined to established roads. Trailing livestock will not be permitted to bed in riparian zones unless absolutely necessary.

Forestry. Woodland product harvests will not be permitted in the management unit.

Off-Road Vehicles. A total of 680 acres in Roubideau and Potter creeks will be closed to ORV use. Vehicle use in the remainder of the management unit will be limited to designated roads and trails yearlong.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be open to development of major utility facilities. Surface-disturbing activities which would have long-term adverse effects on riparian/aquatic systems will be prohibited.

Acquisition of Non-Federal Lands. If they are available, non-federal lands that are necessary for effective management of riparian/aquatic systems may be acquired.

Access. Public access will be acquired into the Terror Creek area for project development and recreation purposes. The Potter Creek road (five miles) and the Dry Fork of Escalante Creek road (two miles) will be closed and rehabilitated and removed from the transportation plan.

Fire Management. A total of 3,082 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category, with 1,607 acres identified for intensive suppression and 1,475 acres identified for conditional suppression. A total of 3,238 acres will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed on these areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 10

3,292 Acres of Public Surface; less than 1 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 10 consists of two tracts in the High Park/Storm King Peak area 20 miles southeast of Montrose. The management unit (3,292 acres of public land) ranges from 8,500 feet to over 10,000 feet in elevation, and is used extensively as an elk calving area in the spring. The largest commercial timber stands in the planning area exist in this unit.

The management unit will be managed to enhance its use as an elk calving area. Any disturbance during the calving season (May 1 through June 15) will be limited as much as possible. Habitat in elk calving areas will be improved, and wildlife will have first priority for allocation of new forage.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate (3,292 acres of federal surface and 1,423 acres of split-estate lands) will be open to leasing with a seasonal stipulation on seismic and drilling activities in effect from May 1 through June 15 to prevent disturbance of calving elk. Variances to

this seasonal stipulation may be granted (see Appendix A).

Soils and Water Resources. Stipulations designed to maintain soil stability and prevent soil slumping will be incorporated into plans for all surface-disturbing land use activities.

Forestry. Skid trails and other roads will be closed and rehabilitated; main haul roads will remain available for public use.

Off-Road Vehicles. The management unit will be open to ORV use except during the elk calving season when all roads will be closed. Access for maintenance of the existing communications site will be permitted at all times.

Major Utilities. Public lands will be open to development of major utility facilities but no surface-disturbing activities will be permitted during the elk calving season.

Acquisition of Non-Federal Lands. If they are available, non-federal lands that would expand elk calving areas and improve extensive recreational opportunities may be acquired.

Access. Public access will be acquired into the Storm King and High Park areas for timber harvest and extensive recreation purposes.

Fire Management. A total of 3,292 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified as intensive suppression areas.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 11

1,990 Acres of Public Surface; less than 1 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 11 is comprised of 1,990 acres of public land adjacent to the Gunnison River west of Delta. It adjoins the Escalante State Wildlife Area which is administered by the Colorado DOW. The management unit present-

ly receives considerable use by waterfowl as nesting and resting habitat. Additional management and minor developments could enhance its potential for increased use as waterfowl habitat.

The management unit will be managed as waterfowl habitat. Adequate cover, wetlands, and nesting structures will be provided. Disturbance will be minimized during the breeding and nesting season (March 15 through June 30). Activities and land uses that are consistent with maintaining waterfowl habitat characteristics will be permitted. The BLM will coordinate management of the area with the DOW.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate (1,990 acres of federal surface and 150 acres of split-estate lands) will be open to leasing with seasonal stipulations on seismic and drilling activities in effect from March 15 through June 30 to protect waterfowl habitat, and from December 1 through April 30 on habitat used for hunting by bald eagles. Variances to the seasonal stipulations may be granted (see Appendix A).

Locatable Minerals. The BOR withdrawal and the BLM powersite classifications in this management unit will be recommended for revocation and opening to permit mineral exploration and development, facilitate resource management, and permit long-term land use planning. Federal mineral estate will be opened to entry and location.

Mineral Materials. Federal mineral estate will be open to disposal of mineral materials except during the waterfowl nesting season.

Acquisition of Non-Federal Lands. If they are available, non-federal lands that are necessary to increase waterfowl habitat and facilitate development and management of the area may be acquired.

Fire Management. The entire management unit (1,990 acres) will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified as a conditional suppression area.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 12

1,895 Acres of Public Surface; less than 1 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 12 is 1,895 acres of public land in Escalante Canyon approximately six miles southwest of the Gunnison River. Several listed plant species and two unique plant associations occur in the management unit. The area also receives significant recreational use due to its scenic qualities and the presence of eroded potholes in Escalante Creek.

The management unit is designated as the Escalante Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). This designation will enhance management and protection of the listed plant species and unique plant associations, and will improve the public's awareness of the recreational hazards of the Escalante potholes. Plan monitoring studies will be developed and activities designed to improve these plants' habitat conditions will be initiated. Surface-disturbing activities will be restricted. Informational signs identifying potential recreational hazards will be provided. Camping will be limited to designated areas.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will remain open to leasing with a no surface occupancy stipulation.

Locatable Minerals. The management unit will be withdrawn from entry and location for locatable minerals.

Mineral Materials. The management unit will be closed to disposal of mineral materials to protect the potential habitats of listed species and unique plant associations.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing will continue at current levels unless studies determine threatened and endangered plant species and unique plant associations or their potential habitats are being degraded.

Forestry. To prevent accidental destruction of listed species and unique plant associations, woodland harvests will not be permitted.

Off-Road Vehicles. To prevent accidental destruction of listed species and unique plant associations, vehicle use within the management unit will be limited to designated roads and trails yearlong.

Visual Resources. The management unit will be managed under VRM Class II guidelines to maintain its scenic qualities.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be closed to development of major utilities to prevent accidental destruction of listed species and unique plant associations, and to maintain its scenic qualities.

Fire Management. All 1,895 acres of public surface in the management unit will be managed under the fire-use category where fire will be utilized as a management tool. Planned or natural ignitions meeting pre-determined prescriptions will be allowed.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 13

377 Acres of Public Surface; less than 1 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 13 consists of two tracts totalling 377 acres of public land eight miles east of Montrose. The smaller tract is north of Highway 50 and the larger tract is south of the highway. The tracts contain the largest population of the endangered clay-loving wild buckwheat in the planning area and also have significant populations of Montrose penstemon, a candidate species.

The entire management unit is designated as the Fairview Research Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern (RNA/ACEC). Plant monitoring studies will be developed in cooperation with the Colorado Natural Areas Program

and actions designed to improve habitat conditions will be initiated. Surface-disturbing activities will be restricted to protect the threatened and endangered species and their potential habitat.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will remain open to leasing with a no surface occupancy stipulation.

Locatable Minerals. The management unit will be withdrawn from entry and location for locatable minerals.

Mineral Materials. The management unit will be closed to disposal of mineral materials to prevent accidental destruction of threatened or endangered plant species or their potential habitat.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing will continue at current levels unless studies determine threatened and endangered plant species or their potential habitats are being degraded.

Off-Road Vehicles. To prevent accidental destruction of threatened or endangered plant species or their potential habitat, the management unit will be closed to ORV use.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be open to development of major utility facilities, except pipelines, so long as there will be no disturbance of threatened or endangered plant species or their potential habitat.

Fire Management. The management unit (377 acres) will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified for conditional suppression.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 14

80 Acres of Public Surface; less than 1 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 14 is an 80-acres site consisting mainly of a volcanic structure with high-value scientific, interpretive, and scenic characteristics. A shelter facility and interpretive nature trail have been developed in the area. Needle Rock is part of the Colorado Natural Areas Program and is one of the significant public land geologic features in Colorado as identified by the BLM's Geologic Advisory Group.

The entire management unit is designated as the Needle Rock Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ONA/ACEC). This designation precludes all surface-disturbing activities that are not consistent with management of the area for natural, scenic, and educational values. The area will be managed to protect these values and for recreation opportunities (sightseeing, picnicking, and geologic study) in a roaded but natural environment. A management plan will be developed.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will remain open to leasing with a no surface occupancy stipulation.

Locatable Minerals. The management unit will remain withdrawn from entry and location for locatable minerals.

Mineral Materials. The management unit will be closed to disposal of mineral materials.

Livestock Grazing. The management unit will remain unallotted for livestock grazing use.

Off-Road Vehicles. Vehicle use within the management unit will be limited to designated roads and trails yearlong.

Visual Resources. The management unit will be managed under VRM Class I guidelines.

Major Utilities. The management unit will be closed to development of major utility facilities.

Fire Management. The entire management unit will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified as an intensive suppression area.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 15

6,783 Acres of Public Surface; 1 percent of the Planning Area

Management Unit 15 consists of 6,783 acres of public land approximately three miles northwest of Delta, Colorado. This area, commonly known as "the adobes", consists of Mancos shale hills and flats which, through wind and water erosion, have formed unique scenic formations. The unit's soils are highly erodible and saline. Spring and summer storms frequently result in high sediment loads and very saline runoff.

The management unit also contains populations of the threatened Uinta Basin hookless cactus and is potential habitat for the endangered clay-loving wild buckwheat and the candidate Montrose penstemon.

The entire management unit is designated as the Adobe Badlands Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ONA/ACEC). The area will be managed to protect its unique scenic qualities and threatened and endangered species' habitats, and to reduce active erosion.

The management unit will be protected from surface-disturbing activities which degrade the area's scenic qualities and accelerate erosion. A complete inventory for threatened and endangered species will be conducted. Forage utilization will be managed to achieve a basal groundcover of 10 percent.

Coal. Federal coal estate will be closed to leasing.

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will remain open to leasing with a no surface occupancy stipulation.

Mineral Materials. The management unit will be closed to the disposal of mineral materials.

Soils and Water Resources. Erosion and salinity control measures will not utilize structures or land treatments which would alter scenic values.

Threatened and Endangered Species. A complete inventory for threatened and endangered species will be conducted. Research and monitoring studies will be established.

Wildlife Habitat. Wildlife forage allocations will remain at current levels. No additional forage allocations will be made. To protect scenic values, no new habitat improvement projects or maintenance of existing projects will be permitted.

Livestock Grazing. Livestock grazing will continue at current levels unless studies determine threatened and endangered plant species or their potential habitat are being degraded. If basal groundcover is less than 10 percent, livestock forage utilization will be managed at 35 percent utilization of key forage species. No additional forage allocations will be made. To protect scenic values, no new livestock improvement projects or maintenance of existing projects will be permitted.

Recreation. The unit will be managed for primitive non-motorized recreational use.

Off-Road Vehicles. The unit will be closed to ORV use to protect the scenic qualities and to prevent accidental destruction of threatened and endangered plant species and their potential habitat.

Visual Resources. To maintain its scenic qualities, the unit will be managed under VRM Class I guidelines.

Major Utilities. The unit will be closed to the development of major utility facilities to prevent accidental destruction of threatened and endangered species and to maintain its scenic qualities.

Fire Management. The unit will be managed under the fire suppression category and identified for conditional suppression.

MANAGEMENT UNIT 16

48,422 Acres of Public Surface; 10 percent of the Planning Area

In general, the public lands in Management Unit 16 (48,422 acres) will be managed according to the policy assumptions and standard resource program management guidance developed for the RMP. No activity plans will be written and no major BLM-funded projects or facilities will be developed within this area. Habitat, vegetation, and other resource studies will be minimal. Specific resource management in this area will be prescribed as follows:

Oil and Gas. Federal oil and gas estate will be open to leasing. A seasonal stipulation on seismic and drilling activities will be in effect from December 1 through April 30 on 1,042 acres of federal surface along the Gunnison and North Fork of the Gunnison rivers that are used by bald eagles as hunting habitat. Variances to the seasonal stipulation may be granted (see Appendix A).

Locatable Minerals. The BOR withdrawals on Fruitland Mesa and along the Gunnison River downstream of Delta will be recommended for revocation to allow for mineral exploration and development, facilitate resource management, permit long-term land use planning, and allow for disposal of 806 acres of public land on Fruitland Mesa. Withdrawals on all other lands identified for disposal will be recommended for revocation. Portions of withdrawals in the management unit which will be affected, are those associated with 108 acres of the Paonia Project, 37 acres of the Gunnison/Arkansas Project, 72 acres of the Uncompahgre Valley Project, and 25 acres along the East Canal. Federal mineral estate will be open to entry and location after the withdrawal is revoked.

Forestry. The reserved federal timber (123 acres) on 160 acres of land deeded to the Girl Scouts of America will be removed from the timber base and not considered for harvest. The management and harvest of this timber would be inconsistent with use of the land as a Girl Scout camp.

Off-Road Vehicles. Public lands within the management unit will be open to ORV use.

Fire Management. A total of 48,422 acres of public land will be managed under the fire suppression category, with 12,401 acres identified for intensive suppression and 36,021 acres identified for conditional suppression.

CHAPTER THREE

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT DECISIONS BY RESOURCE.

Chapter Three summarizes the RMP by resource and describes the monitoring of resource conditions needed to determine the effectiveness of the plan. Monitoring will also provide valuable resource information which will be used to guide future planning. Chapter Three also identifies (1) present implementation priorities by resource and (2) any non-BLM support needed to implement the planned actions. Although not identified in this chapter, the number one priority for all resource programs is to maintain each resource's base program. This includes normal administrative duties as well as responding to public inquiries and requests.

LANDS PROGRAM

Management (Disposal, Acquisition, Access, Major Utilities)

Disposal

One hundred forty-three (143) tracts totalling 11,026 acres are identified for further consideration for disposal. The remaining 472,051 acres of public land managed by the BLM will be retained in federal ownership. Until they are disposed of, potential disposal tracts will be managed according to the management prescription for the management unit in which they occur.

Acquisition

Private lands, if available, may be acquired in Management Unit 1 to improve livestock grazing management or to increase crucial deer and elk winter range; Management Unit 2 to increase crucial deer and elk winter range; Management

Unit 4 to improve recreational opportunities; Management 7 to improve riparian management or to increase crucial deer and elk winter range; Management Unit 9 to improve riparian management; and in Management Unit 11 to increase waterfowl nesting habitat.

Access

Public trail access will be acquired into the Dominquez WSA via the McCarty Trail to provide public access to the southeast portion of the WSA.

Public road access will be acquired into the following areas: Olathe Reservoir for hunting and recreation; McDonald Mesa, Roatcap-Jay Creek, Spaulding Peak-Dry Creek, Oak Mesa and Oak Ridge for hunting, recreation, wildlife habitat management and woodland harvest; Beaver Hill-Linscott Canyon for woodland harvest and recreation; the southwest side of the Gunnison River at the Gunnison Forks and the Gunnison River at Austin for recreation; Red Canyon for public access to the Gunnison Gorge WSA; Terror Creek for livestock administration and recreation; Storm King-High Park for commercial timber harvest and recreation.

Two miles of the Dry Fork of the Escalante Canyon Road will be closed to improve riparian vegetation.

Five miles of the Potter Creek Road will be closed to improve riparian vegetation.

Major Utilities

Since there are no significant resource conflicts Management Units 1, 3, 8, 11, and 16 will be open

to major utility development with minimal stipulations:

Management Unit 2 will be open to major utility development with possible restrictions on construction activities from December 1 through April 30 within crucial deer and elk winter range to protect crucial deer and elk winter range from disturbance.

Management Unit 4 will be closed to major utility development except for the Smith Mountain Gunnison Forks area which would only be open if no other feasible alternatives can be found to protect the areas scenic quality.

Management Unit 5 will be open to major utility development with possible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from March 1 through May 31 to protect wet saline soils.

Management Units 6, 12, 14, and 15 are closed to major utility development.

Management Unit 6 is closed to maintain its wilderness values:

Management Units 12, 14, and 15 are closed to protect their scenic quality.

Management Unit 7 will be closed to major utility development except for one-quarter mile either side of Highway 133 to preclude potential conflicts with coal leasing and extraction.

Management Unit 9 will be open to major utility development except no surface-disturbing activities which will have long-term adverse effects will be permitted to protect riparian vegetation.

Management Unit 10 will be open to major utility development except no surface-disturbing activities will be permitted from May 1 through June 15 to protect calving elk.

Management Unit 13 will be open to major utility development except pipelines and any surface disturbance which would affect threatened or endangered plant species or their potential habitat.

Implementation: Priority

Priority 1. Prepare BLM protective withdrawal orders withdrawing from mineral entry and location in the following areas:

- a. Portions of Management Unit 6 not currently under withdrawal
- b. Management Unit 12
- c. Management Unit 13
- d. Management Unit 14

Priority 2. Prepare necessary documents to remove the BLM protective withdrawal on those lands in Management Unit 4 currently under withdrawal.

Priority 3. Complete route analysis and acquire public access into the following areas:

- a. Olathe Reservoir
- b. Oak Mesa
- c. Storm King-High Park
- d. Beaver Hill-Linscott Canyon
- e. McCarty Trail
- f. Roatcap-Jay Creek
- g. Spaulding Peak-Dry Creek
- h. Red Canyon
- i. Oak Ridge
- j. Terror Creek
- k. McDonald Mesa
- l. Gunnison River at Austin
- m. southwest side of the Gunnison River at Gunnison Forks

Priority 4. Transfer reserved timber rights on 160 acres to the Girl Scouts of America.

Priority 5. Process the transfer of the two landfill R&PP leases to Montrose County and Delta County.

Priority 6. Close and remove from the transportation plan five miles of the Potter Creek road and two miles of the Dry Fork of the Escalante road.

Priority 7. Work with the Bureau of Reclamation in lifting the existing BOR withdrawals for the

Dominquez project and Fruitland Mesa project, and BOR withdrawals on identified potential disposal tracts:

Priority 8. Once all necessary reports have been completed, begin processing tracts which have passed through the disposal screens.

Priority 9. Acquire identified private lands as opportunities arise.

Support

A great deal of cooperation will be needed with Delta County on the road closures; with the Bureau of Reclamation in lifting BOR withdrawals; and with Montrose County and Delta County in transferring the R&PP leases.

AIR QUALITY

Management

Present air quality standards will be adhered to throughout the entire planning area. This is required by law.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Assist other agencies in obtaining baseline air quality data.

Priority 2. Incorporate mitigation into any project proposal which would degrade air quality.

Support

Support will be needed from the State of Colorado, Department of Health, Air Pollution Control Division; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; the U.S. Forest Service; and the National Park Service.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Management

Coal

Since there are no significant resource conflicts, Management Units 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 16 are acceptable for further leasing consideration with no special restrictions.

Management Unit 2 will be acceptable for further leasing consideration with possible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from December 1 through April 30 on crucial deer and elk winter range to protect crucial deer and elk winter range from disturbance.

Management Unit 5 will be acceptable for further leasing consideration with possible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from March 1 through May 31 to prevent excessive erosion on wet saline soils.

Management Units 6 and 15 will be closed to leasing.

Management Unit 6 will be closed to protect its wilderness values.

Management Unit 15 will be closed to protect its scenic quality.

Management Unit 9 may be acceptable for further leasing consideration on a site-specific basis after consultation with affected entities and formulation of mitigating measures designed to protect riparian vegetation.

Management Unit 10 will be acceptable for further leasing consideration with possible restriction on any disturbances from May 1 through June 15 to protect elk calving areas.

Management Unit 11 will be acceptable for further leasing consideration with possible restrictions on any disturbance from March 15 through June 30 to protect nesting waterfowl.

Management Units 12, 13, and 14 are acceptable for further leasing consideration with pos-

sible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities to protect threatened, endangered, or unique species and their potential habitat, and to protect scenic values:

Oil and Gas

Management Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 16 are open to oil and gas leasing with seasonal stipulations from December 1 through April 30 on crucial deer and elk winter range and on bald eagle hunting habitat to protect crucial deer and elk winter range and bald eagle hunting habitat from disturbance.

Management Unit 5 will be open to oil and gas leasing with seasonal stipulations from March 1 through May 31 to protect wet saline soils:

Management Unit 6 is closed to oil and gas leasing to protect its wilderness values:

Since there are no significant resource conflicts Management Units 8 and 9 are open to oil and gas leasing with only standard stipulations:

Management Unit 10 will be open to oil and gas leasing with seasonal stipulations from May 1 through June 15 to protect elk calving areas:

Management Unit 11 will be open to oil and gas leasing with seasonal stipulations from March 15 through June 30 to protect nesting waterfowl, and from December 1 through April 30 on bald eagle hunting habitat to protect bald eagle hunting habitat from disturbance.

Management Units 12, 13, 14, and 15 are open to oil and gas leasing with a no surface occupancy stipulation to protect threatened and endangered species habitat and the areas scenic quality.

Locatable Minerals

Management Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, and 16 are open to mineral entry and location due to the lack of resource conflicts. Existing

BLM and BOR withdrawals will be recommended for lifting as they are no longer needed.

Management Units 6, 12, 13, and 14 are closed to mineral entry and location. These units will be placed under a BLM protective withdrawal.

Management Unit 6 is closed to protect its wilderness values:

Management Units 12 and 13 are closed to protect threatened, endangered and unique plant habitat.

Management Unit 14 is closed to protect its scenic quality.

Mineral Materials

Since there are no significant resource conflicts Management Units 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, and 16 are open to mineral material disposal.

Management Unit 2 is open to mineral material disposal with possible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from December 1 through April 30 on crucial deer and elk winter range to protect crucial deer and elk winter range from disturbance.

Management Unit 5 is open to mineral material disposal with possible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from March 1 through May 31 on wet saline soils to protect wet saline soils from rutting and erosion.

Management Units 6, 9, 12, 13, 14, and 15 are closed to mineral material disposal.

Management Unit 6 is closed to protect its wilderness values:

Management Unit 9 is closed to protect riparian vegetation.

Management Units 12 and 13 are closed to protect threatened, endangered and unique plant habitat.

Management Units 14 and 15 are closed to protect their scenic quality.

Management Unit 11 is open to mineral material disposal with possible restrictions on any disturbance from March 15 through June 30 to protect nesting waterfowl.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Revise oil and gas stipulations sheets.

Priority 2. Prepare a map of areas requiring a plan of operation (areas open to entry and location but closed to ORV).

Priority 3. Prepare mineral reports on acreages of federal mineral estate to be withdrawn:

- a. Portions of Management Unit 6 presently not withdrawn.
- b. Management Unit 12
- c. Management Unit 13
- d. Management Unit 14

Priority 4. Prepare a map of special coal lease stipulation areas.

Priority 5. Establish common use mineral material areas and revise the Umbrella Mineral Materials E.A.

Priority 6. Prepare mineral reports on the potential disposal tracts.

Support

Support will be needed from the Regional Coal Team in identifying tracts for coal leasing.

SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES

Management

Water quality and erosion conditions will continue to be monitored throughout the planning area to establish baseline conditions; identify problem areas and to measure changes due to

management actions. Management Units 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 are available for erosion and salinity control objectives and projects which do not conflict with the primary objectives of each of these management units.

Management Unit 4 will be available for erosion and salinity control objectives and projects designed to reduce erosion and salinity. The Elephant Skin Salinity Control Project will be maintained and protected from disturbance to extend the projects effectiveness.

Watershed Management objectives will be developed for Management Unit 5. The objectives will be designed to reduce downstream salinity.

Projects will be developed in Management Unit 6 only if life, property, or wilderness values are threatened to protect the areas wilderness values. Director approval is needed for any projects.

Management Unit 16 will not be available for any project development due to the low potential economic return.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Maintain existing water quality and erosion monitoring studies.

Priority 2. Amend the Elephant Skin Salinity Control Plan to conform to this RMP.

Priority 3. Determine existing basal ground cover on:

- a. The Elephant Skin project area
- b. Management Unit 15
- c. Management Unit 5

Priority 4. Develop Watershed Management objectives on Management Unit 5.

Priority 5. Implement Watershed Management Plans.

Support

Support will be needed from the Colorado Water Quality Control Division and the Environmental Protection Agency.

RIPARIAN/AQUATIC SYSTEMS**Management**

Management Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 will continue to be inventoried and monitored as per BLM policy. Riparian vegetation condition will, at a minimum, be maintained or preferably improved. Measures designed to mitigate adverse riparian impacts will be required for all surface-disturbing activities.

Riparian Improvement Plans will be prepared for Management Unit 9. These plans will be designed to improve riparian vegetation condition in these areas. This intensive management is designed to accelerate riparian improvement.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Maintain existing studies designed to monitor riparian vegetation trends.

Priority 2. Inventory riparian vegetation condition on the following streams:

- a. Cottonwood Creek
- b. Spring Creek
- c. Escalante Creek
- d. Terror Creek
- e. Jay Creek
- f. Current Creek
- g. Dry fork of Escalante Creek
- h. remaining riparian areas

Priority 3. Update existing AMPs, HMPs, RAMPs, and WMPs to incorporate riparian objectives if needed.

Priority 4. Establish new studies in Management Unit 9 designed to determine the best means of riparian improvement.

Priority 5. Prepare riparian improvement plans on:

- a. Roubideau Creek and its tributaries
- b. remaining creeks in Management Unit 9

Priority 6. Physically close and rehabilitate the the Potter Creek and Dry Fork of Escalante Creek.

Support

No support will be needed.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES**Management**

Clearances and mitigation for threatened and endangered species will be required for all surface-disturbing activities throughout the planning area. This is required by law.

Management Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, and 16 will have measures designed to protect threatened and endangered species and their habitat incorporated into all activity plans. This management will further enhance threatened and endangered species protection.

Management Unit 8 will be inventoried for threatened and endangered species and its boundary adjusted to exclude any located plants. This management will eliminate any potential destruction of threatened and endangered plants.

Management Unit 12 is designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Management Unit 15 is designated an Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental

Concern (ONA/ACEC) in part due to the occurrence of several threatened and endangered species and unique plant associations. Management plans will be developed for these areas and intensive studies established to increase our basic knowledge about these threatened and endangered species.

Management Unit 13 is designated a Research Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern (RNA/ACEC). A management plan will be developed for this area and intensive studies established to increase basic knowledge about these threatened and endangered species.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Conduct a threatened and endangered species inventory of Management Unit 8.

Priority 2. Prepare the management plan for Management Unit 13 and assist the preparation of a management plan for Management Unit 12.

Priority 3. Establish studies in Management Units 12 and 13 designed to determine how best to increase plant frequency.

Priority 4. Conduct a threatened and endangered species inventory in Management Unit 15.

Priority 5. Conduct threatened and endangered species clearances on potential disposal tracts.

Priority 6. Continue general monitoring of threatened and endangered species.

Support

Support is needed from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Colorado Natural Areas Program.

WILDLIFE HABITAT

Management

Additional forage will be available in Management Unit 1 for wildlife only if not needed by livestock to increase forage available for livestock grazing. Non-conflicting wildlife objectives and projects will be incorporated into existing allotment management plans to eliminate the need for multiple activity plans. Desert bighorn sheep will be permitted on Winter Mesa if it is determined there would be no conflict with livestock. This will increase population numbers, re-establish this species in previously occupied habitat and insure species viability in this area.

Wildlife will have priority for any additional forage in Management Unit 2. Habitat management plans will be developed to improve winter range. Desert bighorn sheep may be reintroduced into the Camel Back-Roubideau area to increase population numbers and provide genetic diversity.

Management Units 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 will have habitat trend studies established on all crucial deer and elk winter range to monitor habitat changes. Additional forage will be divided equally between wildlife and livestock to provide forage for both resources. Supplemental releases and reintroduction of wildlife species may be authorized to increase population numbers.

Bighorn sheep will be protected and habitat improved in Management Unit 4 to enhance habitat conditions and increase population numbers.

Management Unit 6 will be managed for a natural distribution of wildlife populations to protect the areas wilderness values. Additional supplemental releases of bighorn sheep will be permitted to increase population numbers and enhance genetic viability.

Wildlife will have priority for any additional forage in Management Unit 7 to increase available forage on public land.

Wildlife will have priority for any additional forage in Management Unit 10 to increase available forage. A habitat management plan will be prepared to improve elk calving habitat.

Management Unit 11 will be managed to improve waterfowl nesting habitat. This will be accomplished in cooperation with the adjoining Colorado DOW Wildlife Area.

No additional forage in Management Unit 15 will be allocated, no existing projects will be maintained, and no new projects will be developed. This management will protect the areas scenic qualities:

Implementation

Priority 1. Cooperate with the Colorado DOW on supplemental releases of bighorn sheep into the Gunnison Gorge.

Priority 2. Establish and maintain monitoring studies on crucial deer and elk winter range to determine habitat condition and trend.

Priority 3. Cooperate with the Colorado DOW on reintroduction of desert bighorn sheep into the Camel Back area.

Priority 4. Prepare habitat management plans in the following areas:

- a. Baldy Peak
- b. Jumbo Mountain-McDonald Mesa
- c. Grand Mesa
- d. Management Unit 11
- e. Uncompahgre Plateau
- f. Billy Creek
- g. Management Unit 10

Priority 5. Incorporate the Gunnison Forks HMP into the Gunnison Gorge RAMP.

Support

Support is needed from the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Management

Management Units 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, and 16 will maintain current forage allocations for livestock grazing until studies determine adjustments are needed. Additional forage will be divided equally between livestock grazing and wildlife to provide forage for both resources. Livestock grazing will be limited to 50 percent utilization of key forage species to permit sustained forage capacity.

Management Unit 1 will be intensively managed to improve vegetation conditions and livestock forage. Livestock grazing will have first priority for any additional forage to increase forage available for livestock grazing. Allotment management plans will be prepared to identify grazing management practices. Any unallotted areas or relinquished permits will be reissued to permit livestock grazing.

In Management Unit 2 any proposed projects must be compatible with wildlife objectives. Additional forage will be available for livestock use only if not needed by wildlife.

In Management Unit 3 no projects will be permitted which would reduce the woodland base. This management will increase production of woodland products.

In Management Unit 4 livestock grazing will be limited to 35 percent utilization of key forage species in the Elephant Skin Salinity Control Project if needed to obtain optimum cover. No grazing will be permitted in the Gunnison Forks HMP area in order to eliminate livestock-recreation conflicts.

In Management Unit 5 additional forage will be divided equally between livestock grazing and wildlife to provide forage for both resources. No livestock will be permitted from March 20 to range readiness to protect wet saline soils. Livestock use will be limited to 35 percent utiliza-

tion of key forage species until basal ground cover objectives are attained to reduce erosion.

In Management Unit 6 livestock grazing and project maintenance will be limited to levels and conditions established prior to wilderness designation to protect the areas wilderness values. New projects may be authorized if necessary for rangeland and/or wilderness protection.

Any additional forage in Management Unit 7 will be allocated to wildlife to increase available forage on public land.

No fences or other projects which would impede ORV use will be permitted in Management Unit 8 to eliminate ORV hazards.

No livestock grazing will be allowed in Management Unit 9 from March 1 to range readiness to accelerate riparian vegetation improvement. Livestock grazing may be limited to 35 percent utilization of key forage species to increase riparian cover. Trailing use will be confined to established roads and limited as much as possible. No bedding livestock will be permitted in riparian areas to reduce bank disturbance.

Wildlife will have first priority for any additional forage in Management Unit 10 to increase available forage.

In Management Units 12 and 13 livestock grazing will continue at current levels unless studies determine threatened or endangered or unique species and their potential habitat are being adversely affected. This is designed to protect threatened, endangered and unique species from potential livestock destruction.

Management Unit 14 will be closed to livestock use to protect its scenic qualities.

Livestock grazing will continue at current levels in Management Unit 15 unless studies determine threatened and endangered species and their potential habitat are being adversely affected. This is designed to protect threatened and en-

dangered species from potential livestock destruction. Livestock grazing use will be limited to 35 percent utilization of key forage species until basal ground cover objectives are attained to increase cover thereby reducing erosion. No additional forage allocations for livestock will be made. No existing projects will be maintained and no new projects will be developed to protect the areas scenic qualities.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Continue existing vegetation trend studies.

Priority 2. Increase monitoring of actual livestock trailing use of Management Unit 9:

- a. Roubideau Creek
- b. Roatcap-Jay Creek
- c. Remaining riparian areas in Management Unit 9

Priority 3. Establish and maintain vegetation condition studies in Management Unit 1.

Priority 4. Limit grazing permits on allotments containing potential disposal tracts to one year. Adjust AUM allocations as tracts are exchanged or sold.

Priority 5. Change livestock season of use in Management Units 5 and 9 to exclude livestock grazing from March 1 to range readiness.

Priority 6. Evaluate and update existing AMPs to reflect decisions in this RMP.

Priority 7. Develop new AMPs on grazing allotments without current plans in Management Unit 1.

Priority 8. Implement new AMPs as funds become available.

Support

Support is needed from the Montrose District Grazing Advisory Board.

FORESTRY

Management

In Management Unit 1 the forest resource will be managed to increase livestock forage.

In Management Unit 2 the forest resource will be managed to improve wildlife habitat with possible restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from December 1 through April 30 on crucial deer and elk winter range to protect crucial deer and elk winter range and its use from disturbance.

In Management Unit 3 the forest resource would be intensively managed for woodland product harvest within sustained yield production limits to increase available woodland products. Forest Management Plans would be prepared and, if needed, plantations established to increase forest product availability.

In Management Unit 4 the only area open to woodland product harvest is 1,255 acres in the Black Ridge area. This area may have restrictions on surface-disturbing activities from December 1 through April 30 within crucial deer and elk winter range to protect crucial deer and elk winter range from disturbance.

Management Units 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, and 16 will be managed for sustained yield production of forest products to meet current and future demands for woodland products.

Management Unit 6 will not be available for woodland harvest except for insect or disease control efforts to protect its wilderness values.

Management Units 9, 12, and 14 are closed to harvest.

Management Unit 9 is closed to protect riparian vegetation.

Management Units 12 and 14 are closed to protect their scenic values.

Management Unit 10 will have timber and woodland harvests designed to improve elk calving habitat.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Rewrite the Umbrella Forest Products environmental assessment to conform to this RMP.

Priority 2. Assist in the preparation of a management plan for Management Unit 10.

Priority 3. Prepare Forest Management Plans for the following areas:

- a. Jones Draw
- b. Highway 90
- c. North Escalante
- d. Lee Point
- e. Beaver Hill
- f. Dirty George
- g. Youngs Peak
- h. Sawmill Mesa
- i. West Transfer Road
- j. Dry Creek
- k. Government Springs
- l. Loghill

Support

Support is needed from the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

RECREATION

Management

River access will be developed at the Escalante Bridge site in Management Unit 1 to provide an improved landing area. Maps and informational pamphlets will be prepared to limit boater landowner conflicts along the lower Gunnison River between Delta and Bridgeport.

Management Units 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 16 will be managed for extensive recreational use to meet public demands for dispersed recreation.

Management Unit 4 will be managed for recreational use. The Peach Valley area will be managed predominately for ORV use while the remainder will be managed for its natural primitive values. This management is designed to meet a wide variety of recreational demands.

Management Unit 6 will be managed for low impact non-motorized recreational use. Permits may be required for commercial and non-commercial use. The Gunnison River will be managed for six to ten group encounters per day, with only two (as per the 1988 Gunnison Gorge RAMP) commercial trips per day. This management is designed to protect the areas wilderness values.

Management Unit 8 will be developed for intensive ORV use. Loading ramps and informational signs will be constructed. This management will provide ORV users an area with limited hazards.

Management Unit 12 will be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to protect the areas threatened and endangered species and recreational values. Informational signs and warnings will be posted at the Potholes to inform the public of the hazards.

Management Unit 14 will be designated an Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ONA/ACEC) to protect the areas scenic qualities. A management plan will be prepared.

Management Unit 15 will be designated an Outstanding Natural Area (ONA/ACEC) to protect the areas threatened and endangered species and scenic qualities. A management plan will be prepared to manage the area for its primitive, non-motorized recreational values.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Revise the Gunnison Gorge RAMP or prepare an RMP amendment to bring these two documents into conformance.

Priority 2. Implement the Gunnison Gorge RAMP.

Priority 3. Prepare and implement a management plan for Management Unit 14.

Priority 4. Prepare maps and informational pamphlets for the lower Gunnison River.

Priority 5. Construct a ramp at the Escalante Bridge.

Priority 6. Prepare and implement a management plan for Management Unit 12.

Priority 7. Prepare and implement a management plan for Management Unit 8.

Priority 8. Prepare and implement a management plan for Management Unit 15.

Priority 9. Construct the McCarty Trail trailhead.

Support

No support will be needed.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE MANAGEMENT

Management

See the map in Appendix C.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Signing and public informational maps.

Support

No support will be needed.

CULTURAL RESOURCES**Management**

Clearances and mitigation for cultural resources will be required for all surface-disturbing activities throughout the planning area. This is required by law.

Management Unit 1 will have a Class III cultural inventory conducted on 5,800 acres between Highway 90 and Sandy Wash to identify the presence of cultural resources and determine the areas cultural significance.

Management Units 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 will have measures designed to protect cultural sites incorporated into all activity plans. This is required by law.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Survey all potential disposal tracts.

Priority 2. Conduct a Class III survey on 5,800 acres in Management Unit 1.

Priority 3. Identify other sensitive areas based on modeling.

Support

Support will be needed from the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**Management**

Protective measures will be developed as this resource is discovered. Little is known about this

resource in this area. As information is obtained specific management will be identified.

Implementation Priority

No implementation is scheduled.

Support

No support will be needed.

VISUAL RESOURCES**Management**

Management Unit 1 will be managed under VRM Class III, except for Escalante Canyon which will be Class II to protect its scenic qualities.

Management Unit 2 will be managed under VRM Class III to protect its scenic qualities while permitting some intrusion.

Management Units 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 16 will be managed under the existing VRM classifications as no changes were deemed necessary.

Management Unit 4 will be managed under the existing VRM classes, except for open ORV areas which will be managed under VRM Class IV to allow substantial change.

Management Unit 6, 14, and 15 will be managed under VRM Class I to protect the area's scenic qualities.

Management Unit 8 will be managed under VRM Class IV to allow substantial change.

Management Unit 12 will be managed under VRM Class II to protect its scenic qualities.

Implementation Priority

No implementation is scheduled.

Support

No support will be needed.

WILDERNESS

Management

Management Unit 6 will be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation to protect its wilderness values.

Implementation Priority

Priority 1. Prepare the Final Wilderness EIS

Priority 2. Prepare the Wilderness Study Report for each of the three Wilderness Study Areas.

FIRE

Management

Fire will be managed as displayed on the map in Appendix D. This management is based on resource conditions; proximity of private development and risk of fire spread.

Implementation Priority

No implementation is scheduled.

Support

No support will be needed.

APPENDIX A

STIPULATIONS FOR OIL AND GAS LEASES

The following stipulations will be added to future oil and gas leases on both federal surface and split-estate lands where assigned for each management unit (see beginning page 146). The actual wording of these stipulations may be adjusted at the time of leasing to reflect future legislation, court decisions or policy changes; however, the protection standards contained in these stipulations will be maintained. Any change to the protection content of the stipulation would require an amendment to the RMP/EIS.

1. Highly Erodible and/or Saline Soil Areas

Stipulation: To protect watersheds from salinity infusions and to protect highly erodible soil areas where low soil productivity would prolong or disallow revegetation, all development activities (exploration, drilling, etc.) will be allowed only from June 1 through February 28. Exceptions to this limitation may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on salinity and highly erodible soil areas. The stipulation will not be waived, excepted, or modified if it is determined that the activity would cause accelerated erosion that would result in excessive amounts of salinity being contributed to the Colorado River. Variances could be allowed if soils are not saturated during the typical high soil moisture period when these these soils are most susceptible to damage (March 1 through May 31), or if impacts

could be mitigated, or if site-specific conditions do not warrant the stipulation (small amount of disturbance, short duration of operations, etc.).

Resource information for split-estate lands has not been verified by the BLM. Verification will occur during review of Applications for Permit to Drill (APD's). On-site inspection and consultation with the surface owner and operator may reveal that (1) the impacts addressed by the stipulation will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level, or (2) the resources of concern are not present. Upon either of these determinations by the Authorized Office, the stipulations can be waived, modified, or excepted without public notice other than that provided for the APD. If, after on-site inspection and consultation with the private surface landowner, it is determined by the Authorized Officer that conditions necessary to avoid impacts to private resources would adversely impact the public resources addressed by these stipulations, the impacts will be assessed. If, based upon such assessment, the Authorized Officer makes a decision to substantially change or waive one or more stipulations, a 30-day public review period will be provided in addition to the public notice period for receipt of the APD. (These two 30-day notice and review periods may overlap.)

2. Threatened, Endangered, Candidate, and Sensitive Plant Areas

Stipulation: To protect the threatened, endangered, candidate, and sensitive plants and their potential habitat within the Escalante Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern and the Fairview Research Natural Area, an area of critical environmental concern, no surface occupancy will be permitted in these areas. Except

Appendix

tions to this restriction may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on threatened, endangered, candidate, and sensitive plants and their potential habitats within these areas.

3. Bald Eagle Winter Concentration Areas

Stipulation: To protect bald eagles from activities that would cause abandonment of winter concentration areas, all development activities (exploration, drilling, etc.) will only be allowed in these areas from May 1 through November 30. Exceptions to this limitation may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on wintering bald eagles.

Resource information for split-estate lands has not been verified by the BLM. Verification will occur during review of Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs). On-site inspection and consultation with the surface owner and operator may reveal that (1) the impacts addressed by the stipulation will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level, or (2) the resources of concern are not present. Upon either of these determinations by the Authorized Officer, the stipulations can be waived, modified, or excepted without public notice other than that provided for the APD. If, after on-site inspection and consultation with the private surface landowner, it is determined by the Authorized Officer that conditions

necessary to avoid impacts to private resources would adversely impact the public resources addressed by these stipulations, the impacts will be assessed. If, based upon such assessment, the Authorized Officer makes a decision to substantially change or waive one or more stipulations, a 30-day public review period will be provided in addition to the public notice period for receipt of the APD. (These two 30-day notice and review periods may overlap.)

4. Crucial Deer and Elk Winter Ranges

Stipulation: To protect crucial deer and elk winter ranges from activities that would cause these species to abandon areas of crucial winter forage and cover for less suitable ranges, all development activities (exploration, drilling, etc.) will only be allowed from May 1 through November 30. Exceptions to this limitation may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on deer and elk utilization of crucial winter ranges. Variances could be allowed if these crucial ranges are not being utilized due to mild winter conditions or temporary changes in winter range utilization, or if impacts could be mitigated, or if site-specific conditions do not warrant the stipulation (small amount of disturbance, short duration of operations, etc.).

Resource information for split-estate lands has not been verified by the BLM. Verification will occur during review of Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs). On-site inspection and consultation with the surface owner and operator may reveal that (1) the impacts addressed by the stipulation will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level, or (2) the resources of concern are not present. Upon either of these determinations by the Authorized Officer, the stipulations

can be waived, modified, or excepted without public notice other than that provided for the APD. If, after on-site inspection and consultation with the private surface landowner, it is determined by the Authorized Officer that conditions necessary to avoid impacts to private resources would adversely impact the public resources addressed by these stipulations, the impacts will be assessed. If, based upon such assessment, the Authorized Officer makes a decision to substantially change or waive one or more stipulations, a 30-day public review period will be provided in addition to the public notice period for receipt of the APD. (These two 30-day notice and review periods may overlap.)

5. Elk Calving Areas

Stipulation: To protect elk calving areas from activities that would force elk to abandon these areas during critical calving periods, all development activities (exploration, drilling, etc.) will only be allowed from July 16 through April 14. Exceptions to this limitation may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on deer and elk utilization of crucial winter ranges.

Resource information for split-estate lands has not been verified by the BLM. Verification will occur during review of Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs). On-site inspection and consultation with the surface owner and operator may reveal that (1) the impacts addressed by the stipulation will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level, or (2) the resources of concern are not present. Upon either of these determinations by the Authorized Officer, the stipulations can be waived, modified, or excepted without public notice other than that provided for the

APD. If, after on-site inspection and consultation with the private surface landowner, it is determined by the Authorized Officer that conditions necessary to avoid impacts to private resources would adversely impact the public resources addressed by these stipulations, the impacts will be assessed. If, based upon such assessment, the Authorized Officer makes a decision to substantially change or waive one or more stipulations, a 30-day public review period will be provided in addition to the public notice period for receipt of the APD. (These two 30-day notice and review periods may overlap.)

6. Waterfowl Habitat

Stipulation: To protect waterfowl from activities that would alter breeding behavior, increase the incidence of nest abandonment, and decrease breeding success, all development activities (exploration, drilling, etc.) will only be allowed in waterfowl habitats from July 1 through March 14. Exceptions to this limitation may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on breeding and nesting waterfowl. Variances could be allowed if these breeding habitats are not being utilized, or if impacts could be mitigated, or if site-specific conditions do not warrant the stipulation (few individuals affected, short duration of operations, etc.).

Resource information for split-estate lands has not been verified by the BLM. Verification will occur during review of Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs). On-site inspection and consultation with the surface owner and operator may reveal that (1) the impacts addressed by the stipulation will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level, or (2) the resources of concern

Appendix

are not present. Upon either of these determinations by the Authorized Officer, the stipulations can be waived, modified, or excepted without public notice other than that provided for the APD. If, after on-site inspection and consultation with the private surface landowner, it is determined by the Authorized Officer that conditions necessary to avoid impacts to private resources would adversely impact the public resources addressed by these stipulations, the impacts will be assessed. If, based upon such assessment, the Authorized Officer makes a decision to substantially change or waive one or more stipulations, a 30-day public review period will be provided in addition to the public notice period for receipt of the APD. (These two 30-day notice and review periods may overlap.)

7. Outstanding Natural Areas/Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Stipulation: To protect the scenic, natural, and scientific values of the Adobe Badlands Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern, and the Needle Rock Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern, no surface occupancy will

be permitted within these areas. Exceptions to this restriction may be authorized in writing by the BLM's Authorized Officer. The affected portions of this lease are (legal description).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the Authorized Officer if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on the scenic, natural, and scientific values of these areas.

8. Wilderness Study Areas

Stipulation: Wilderness Protection Stipulation Form CSO 3000-1 (July 1980) is attached per Washington Office Instruction Memo No. 80-509 (5/12/80). This memo implements the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Land Under Wilderness Review (12/12/79) and amendments).

Reasons for Exceptions: This stipulation will be attached to all leases involving lands within WSAs, and will apply until these lands are released from WSA status.

APPENDIX B

COAL PLANNING

The following is a summary of the Coal planning process for the Uncompahgre Basin RMP. Detailed and specific information is available in the Coal Unsuitability Report. This report is available at the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area Office and the Montrose District Office.

The Federal Coal Leasing Amendment Act of 1976 outlines procedures for leasing and development of federally-owned coal lands. This Act requires that coal leasing be compatible with land use allocations outlined in comprehensive land use plans. The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 established federal standards for regulating surface mining and reclamation activities on federal, state, and private lands. The Department of Interior has incorporated these Acts into regulations requiring the analysis of four coal planning screens during land use planning. Documented in Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations-Part 3420.1 (43 CFR 3420.1), these planning screens are applied to determine the leaseability of federal coal lands.

The first screen (coal development potential) eliminates federal coal lands that have little or no coal development potential. The second screen (coal unsuitability review) eliminates lands that have sensitive resources. The third screen (multiple-use tradeoffs) eliminates lands that have resources considered more important than coal or identifies lands where special stipulations are required to protect important resources. The fourth screen (surface owner consultation) eliminates private land with federal coal based on the landowner's opposition to surface mining.

The first coal planning screen was completed prior to 1980 when the U.S. Geological Survey

(USGS) identified as coal planning areas all the federal coal lands within the region that have coal development potential. The Bookcliffs (965 acres), Paonia/Somerset (94,960 acres), and Cimarron Ridge (14,134 acres) coal planning areas were identified within the Uncompahgre Basin planning area.

Federal coal lands passing through the first coal planning screen are subject to application of the 20 coal unsuitability criteria in the second coal planning screen. These 20 criteria, outlined in Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations-Part 3461.1 (43 CFR 3461.1), are a uniform national standard to insure that 20 specific resources and land uses are not foregone by coal mining. Federal coal lands not meeting the standards required by each criterion are determined to be unsuitable for coal leasing. A number of criteria have exemptions and exceptions. Application of these exemptions and exceptions may allow certain types of coal mining.

A total of 20,945 acres of federal coal lands are presently leased and were not subject to the second coal planning screen as per 43 CFR 3461.4-2. An additional 5,718 acres of presently leased federal coal lands were previously determined to be suitable as identified in the following documents: the North Fork MFP as amended; and the environmental assessments for the West Elk Coal Company Coal Lease Modification Application (Serial Number D-044569), the Colorado Westmoreland, Inc., and Western Slope Carbon, Inc., Short-Term Competitive Coal Lease Applications (Serial Numbers C-27432 and C-27103), and the Grand Mesa Properties Company Coal Lease Modification Application (Serial Number D-055156).

Appendix

All portions of the coal planning areas within the Uncompahgre Basin planning area that are not leased for coal development are undergoing the second coal planning screen in concurrence with this RMP/EIS. These unleased federal coal lands total 83,396 acres in the Bookcliffs and Paonia/Somerset coal planning areas.

Based on initial application of the 20 criteria, 82,827 acres were determined to be acceptable for further coal leasing consideration. Of these lands, 15,662 acres were determined to be suitable only with specified constraints. Lands determined to be unsuitable for further leasing consideration total 569 acres. No exemptions were determined to apply within the review area. Prior to the leasing of a federal coal tract, the results of this coal planning screen will be reviewed on a site-specific basis to determine if any changes are necessary in the application of the 20 criteria.

Public lands that have resources determined to be more important than coal development are

either protected by special stipulations or eliminated from coal leasing consideration in the third coal planning screen. These multiple-use trade-off determinations are made during the RMP/EIS process. This RMP/EIS fulfills the requirements of the third coal planning screen for all of the federal coal within the planning area, including existing leased lands.

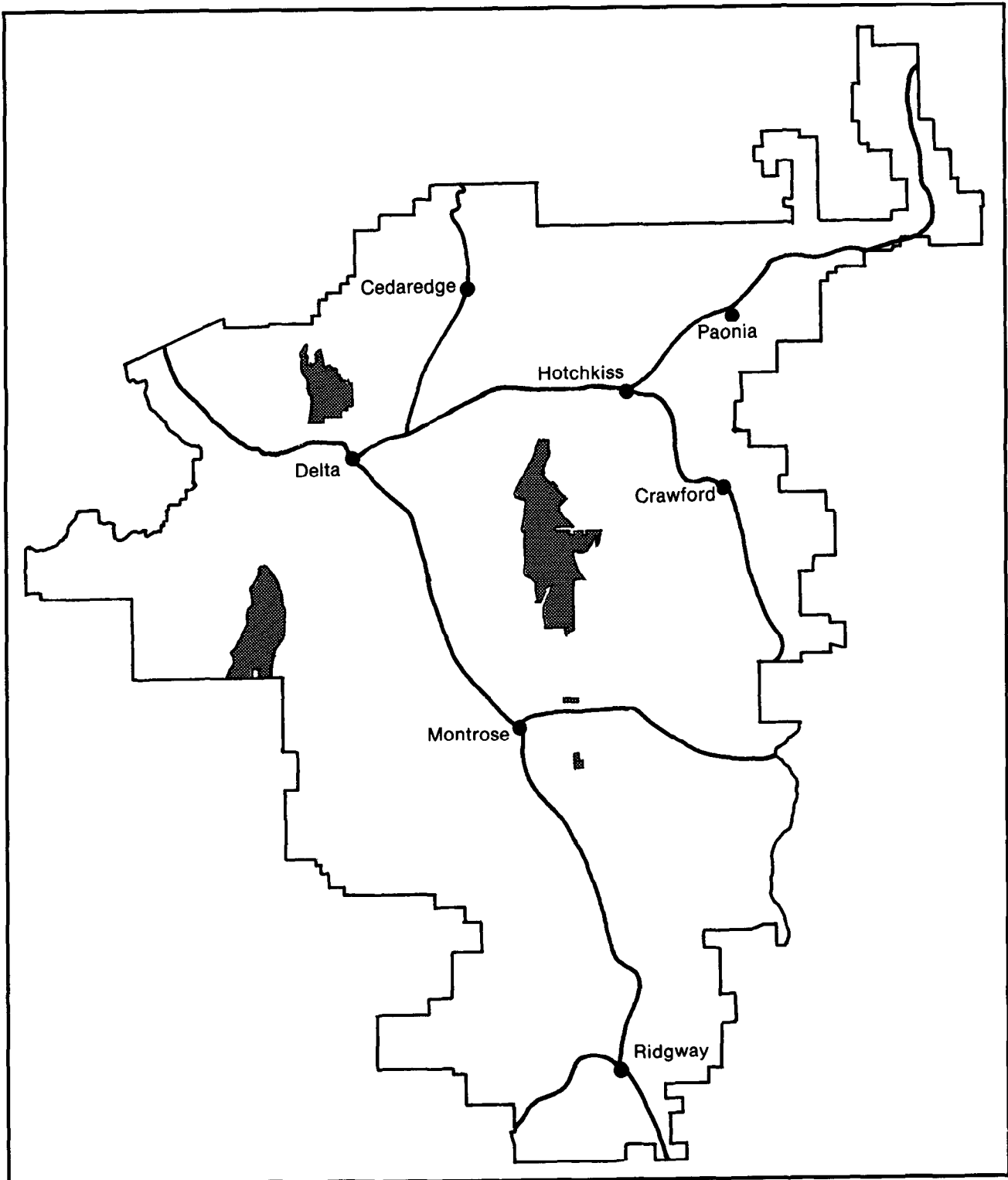
The fourth coal planning screen requires consultation with the owners of split-estate lands when federal coal is being considered for leasing and surface mining techniques are considered likely. This coal planning screen was determined to not apply to the coal planning areas within the Uncompahgre Basin planning area as no surface mining of significant amounts of coal is anticipated.

Information derived from completion of these four coal planning screens is forwarded to the appropriate interagency Regional Coal Team.

APPENDIX C

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE MANAGEMENT

Map #1

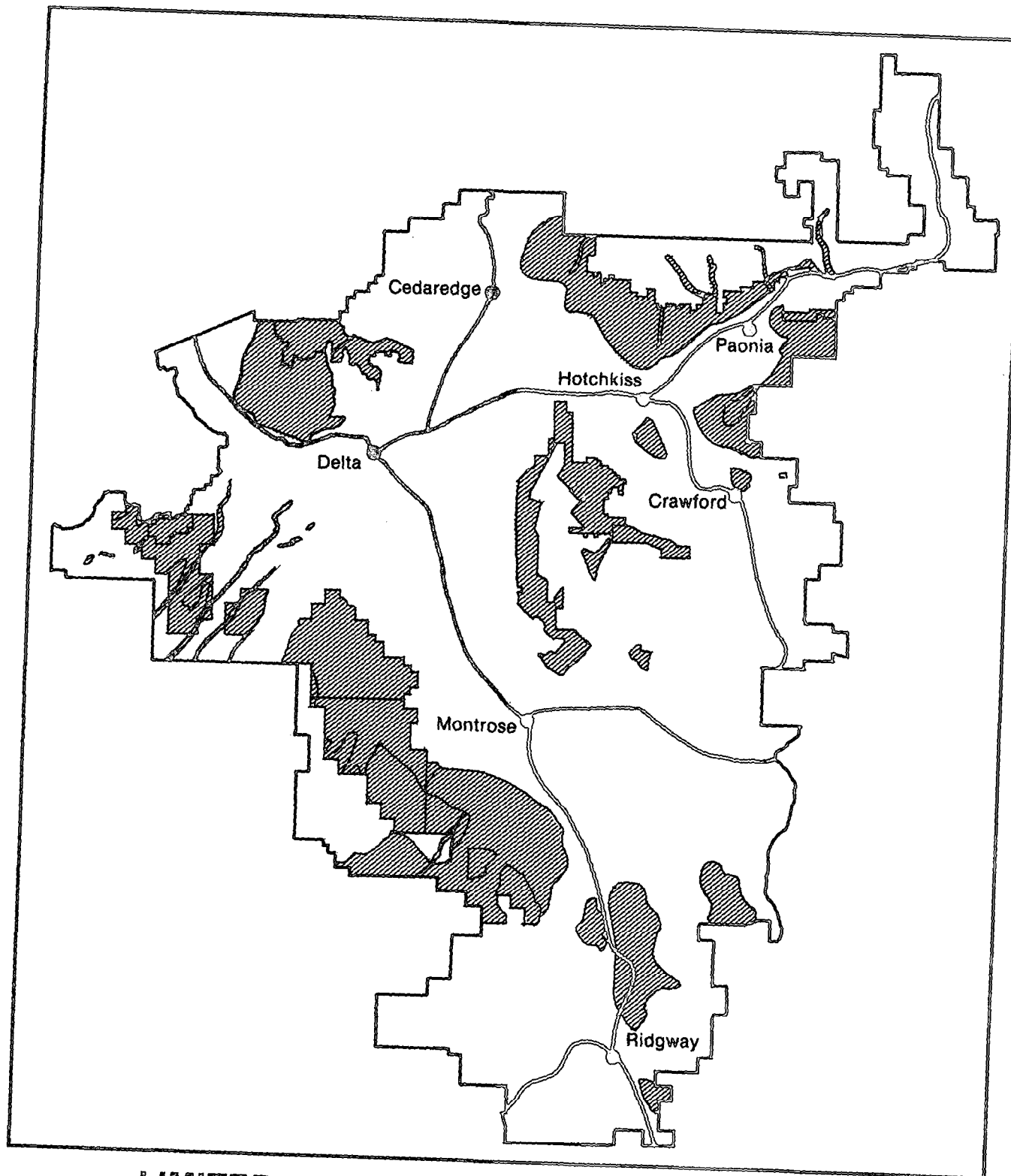


CLOSED: Areas Which Are Closed
to Off-road Vehicle Use Year-round.



Scale: 1" = 10 Miles

APPENDIX C
OFF-ROAD VEHICLE MANAGEMENT
Map #2

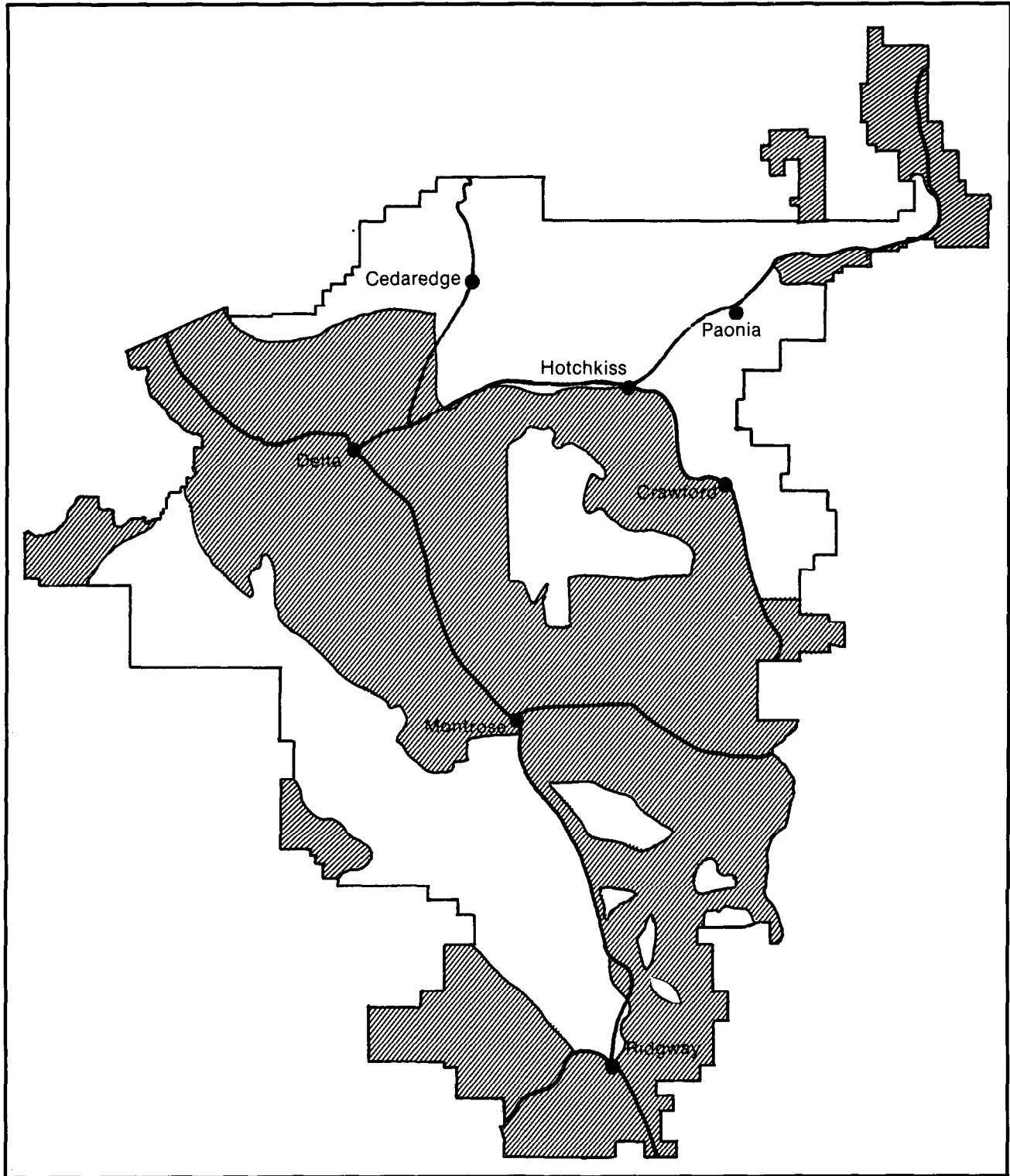


LIMITED: Areas Where Vehicle Use Will Be Limited to Designated Roads and Trails, Either Seasonally or Year-round.



Scale: 1" = 10 Miles

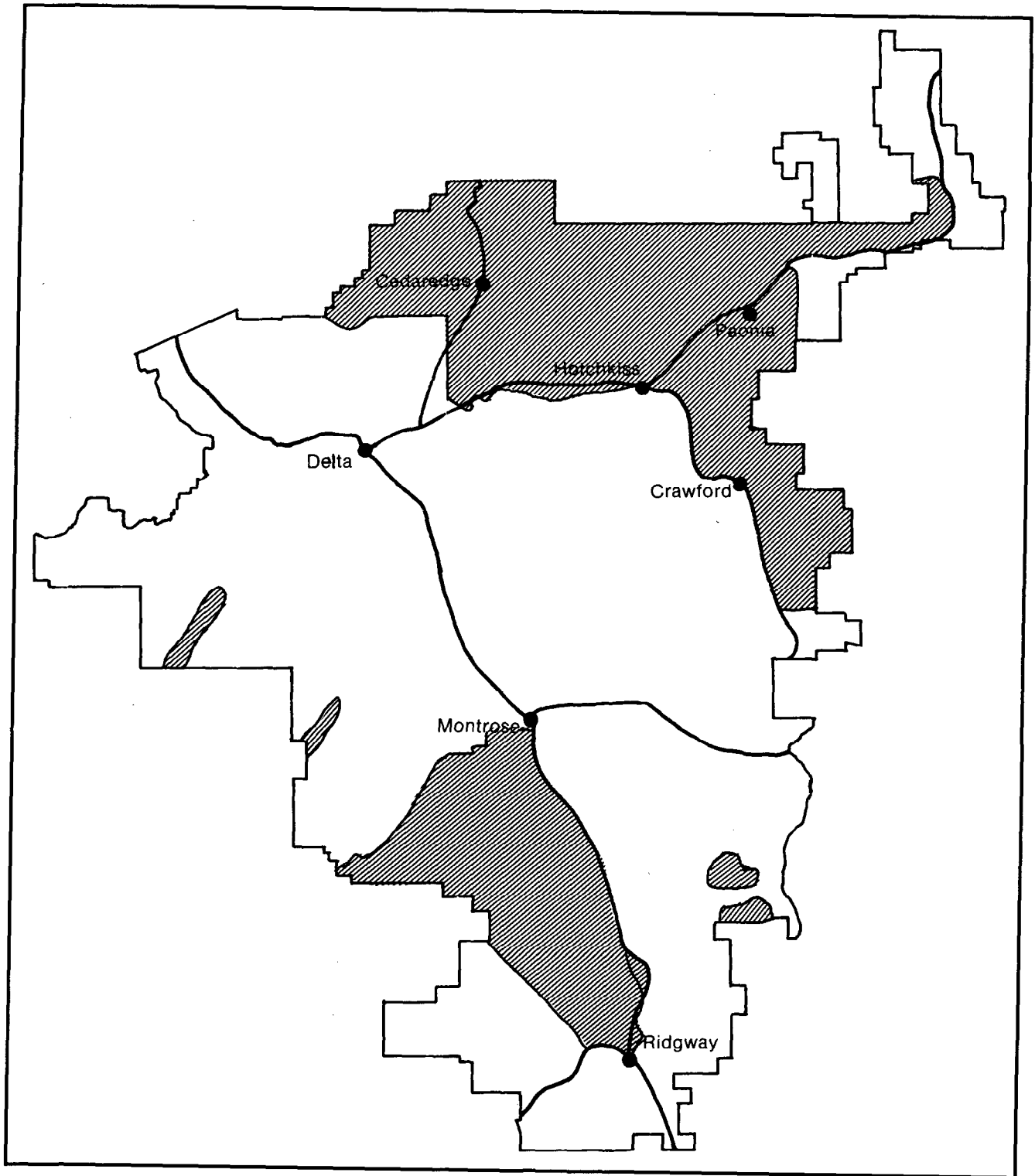
APPENDIX D
Fire Suppression Category
Conditional Suppression Areas



MAP D - 1



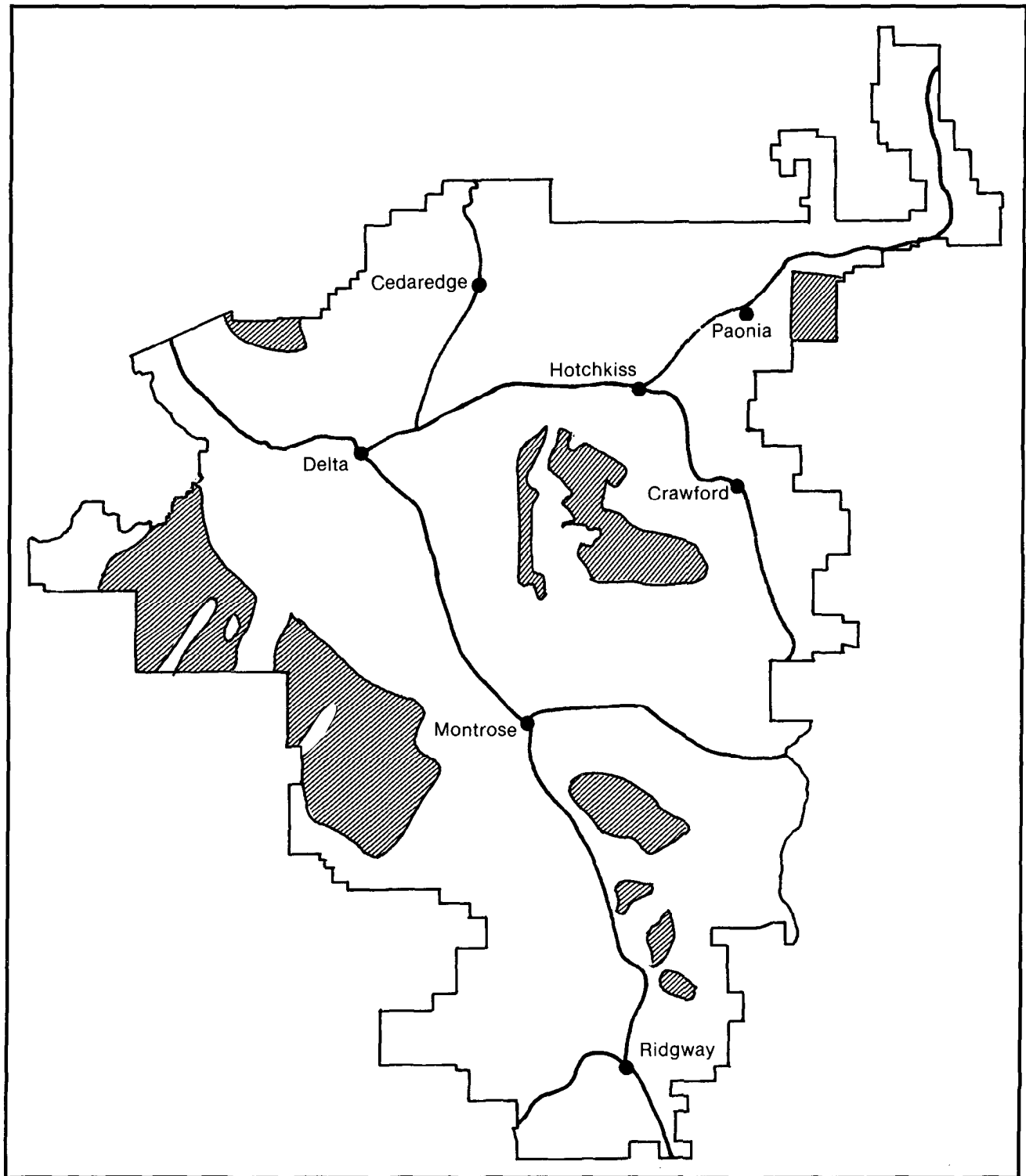
APPENDIX D
Fire Suppression Category
Intensive Suppression Areas



MAP D - 2



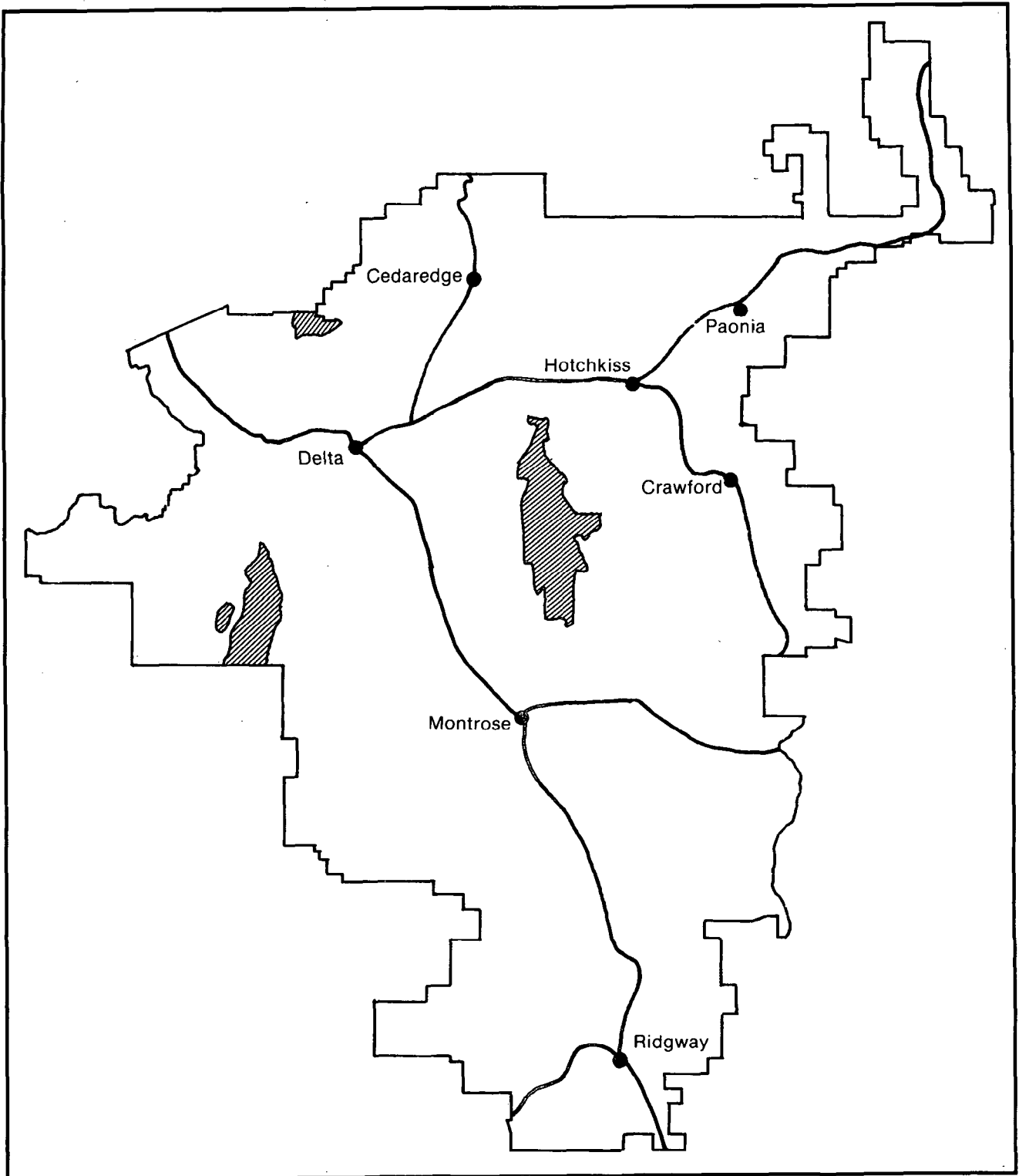
APPENDIX D
Fire Use Category
Planned or Natural Ignitions



MAP D - 3



APPENDIX D
Fire Use Category
Natural Ignitions Only



MAP D - 4



APPENDIX E

SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

Escalante Canyon ACEC (Management Unit 12)

A 1,895-acre portion of Escalante Canyon located west of Delta, Colorado is designated as the Escalante Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Specifically, this area is located in T. 51 N., R. 13 W., sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, and 30, New Mexico Principal Meridian.

This area contains several federally-listed threatened and endangered plant species and two unique plant associations. The area also receives significant recreational use.

Threatened and endangered plant monitoring studies will be developed and habitat improvement activities initiated. Information signs identifying potential recreational hazards will be provided. Oil and gas leases will have a no surface occupancy stipulation, the area will be withdrawn from entry and location for locatable minerals, and all surface-disturbing activities will be restricted to protect and enhance listed and unique plant habitat.

Fairview RNA/ACEC (Management Unit 13)

An area comprised of two tracts totalling 377 acres located eight miles east of Montrose, Colorado, is designated as the Fairview Research Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Specifically, this area is located in T. 49 N., R. 8 W., section 18 and 19; T. 48 N., R. 8 W., section 6; and T. 48 N., R. 9 W., section 1, New Mexico Principal Meridian.

The tracts contain a large population of a listed endangered species and significant populations of a candidate species.

Plant monitoring studies will be developed in cooperation with the Colorado Natural Areas Program and actions designed to improve habitat conditions initiated. Oil and gas leases will have a no surface occupancy stipulation, the area will be withdrawn from entry and location for locatable minerals and all surface-disturbing activities will be restricted to protect and enhance endangered species habitats.

Needle Rock ONA/ACEC (Management Unit 14)

An 80-acre site located northeast of Crawford, Colorado, is designated as the Needle Rock Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Specifically, this area is located in T. 15 S., R. 91 W., section 27, 6th Principal Meridian.

This site consists mainly of a volcanic geological structure with high-value scientific, interpretive, and scenic characteristics.

The area will be managed to protect the scientific and scenic qualities of this site. Oil and gas leases will contain a no surface occupancy stipulation, the area will remain withdrawn from entry and location for locatable minerals, and the area will be managed under VRM Class I guidelines.

Adobe Badlands ONA/ACEC (Management Unit 15)

A 6,783-acre area located approximately three miles northwest of Delta, Colorado, is designated as the Adobe Badlands Outstanding Natural Area/Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Specifically, this area is located in T. 14 S., R. 96 W., sections 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, and 36; and

Appendix

T. 15 S., R. 96 W., sections 2, 3, and 4, 6th Principal Meridian.

This area consists of Mancos shale hills and flats which, through wind and water erosion, have formed unique scenic formations. The area's soils are highly erodible and saline, resulting in high sediment loads and very saline runoff. The area also contains known and potential habitat for several endangered and threatened plant species.

The area will be managed to protect its unique scenic qualities, improve threatened and endangered species habitat, and reduce active erosion. Oil and gas leases will contain a no surface occupancy stipulation; forage utilization will be limited if necessary to reduce erosion rates; and the area will be protected from surface-disturbing activities which would degrade scenic qualities or accelerate erosion.